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W. E. FORD

A BIOGRAPHY

William Elphinstone Ford
from a pencil sketch at the age of 15 by an unknown artist

W. E. Ford: A Biography

BY

J. D. BERESFORD

AND

KENNETH RICHMOND

WITH PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE

LONDON: 48 PALL MALL

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PREFATORY NOTE

A DRAWING in Mrs. Ford's possession, representing Ford at about the age of fifteen, has been deliberately chosen in preference to later photographs for the frontispiece of this book. This picture of the boy will have a novel interest for most of those who knew and admired the man; but there is another reason for the choice. The drawing has in it the spirit of Ford's personality and character; the photographs have not.

The authors have to thank Mrs. Ford for her kindness in revising the work before publication, and in affording material help as regards the collation of facts; at the same time they wish to take all responsibility in matters of conjecture and interpretation, inseparable from any but a coldly formal biography, but not fitly to be presented as though based upon Mrs. Ford's authority.

It has not fallen within the scope of this book to present Ford's system of thought as a coherent whole, but it is hoped that this may be attempted in a later volume; the co-operation is cordially invited of those who at any time belonged to his circle, and any letters bearing definitely upon his position as a thinker will be welcomed. These may be sent care of the publishers. Any letters in Ford's own writing will be copied and carefully returned.

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PART I

A PERSONAL IMPRESSION

By J. D. Beresford

CHAPTER I

If we wanted an excuse for publishing this life of W. E. Ford, I should look for it in the fact that biography is in the main didactic, a fact that helps to explain the usual choice of a subject who has succeeded in life. Success in this connection, however, has a somewhat limited meaning, and implies the making of a mark in public life or the accomplishment of some achievement in the public service—the invention of the Davy lamp, for example. The more obvious reason for this choice of subject is that the book receives a preliminary advertisement. There is a demand for the lives of notable men, simply because they were notable. But I submit that the moral purpose of biography underlies the demand also. As in the old Sunday-school books, the clear indication remains prominent: 'See what comes of being good!' or to adapt the lesson to present conditions: 'See what comes of being clever!' Nevertheless, when only the cleverness that leads to commercial success is the biographer's field of study, he is still under the influence of the old tradition, and takes care to omit the suggestion that his subject was an unprincipled swindler. If the truth is altogether too

obvious, he dwells on the gentleness of his relations in private life. It has become almost a convention that the financier who controls the money-market and wreaks death and destitution without a moment's consideration, is in private life a devoted husband and father. I cannot recall a single instance of a biography that depicted the reverse attitude; but the life of a man who brought happiness to the many and was a perfect beast in his own home, would make very interesting reading.

An exception to the 'success' rule, and one that upholds my present contention, is to be found in the demand for the lives of men who were in no way celebrated but were unquestionably 'good.' The lives of missionaries and obscure ministers mostly find a sale that justifies publication. Some deep instinct in mankind looks for and finds satisfaction in salvation by morality; and the contemplation of that salvation achieved by another, either affords us a temporary relief from the terrible strain of being good ourselves, or soothes us with the certainty that we, too, shall eventually profit by our renunciations. (It is worth while to note, incidentally, that the form of 'goodness' held up for example in works of this type is nearly always negative; that is to say, by renunciation. John Knox and his like had more influence on the English Prayer-book and the English character, than all the mystics.)

The third general category of biography—the life

of the creative artist—achieves the ethical only by omission. And when a man is confronted with the task of depicting the life of, say, François Villon or Paul Verlaine, the ethical motive has to be ignored, save by the implication that Verlaine, for example, might have been a still better poet if he had been a better man. Nevertheless, the trace of the tradition remains in any biography that is not, quite frankly, a *chronique scandaleuse*. We know perfectly well, now, that William Godwin was a dreadful rascal, but we do not know it from reading Mr. Kegan Paul's life of him. Yes, even in the biographies of the creative artists, the great attempt is always implicit—often, of course, by the antithetical method of 'Oh! what a pity.' We may content ourselves with the reflection that the idle apprentice gets to the devil all right, though he may have written great poetry or great music on the way.

All this prelude is by way of justification for an experiment in writing the life of a man who was completely unknown to the general public, and who died in Japan, not in the effort to illuminate the heathen, but rather to find illumination for himself. The name of William Elphinstone Ford will evoke no response in the minds of newspaper readers. He published no book, he was not an explorer, nor an inventor, nor a politician, he was connected with no religious society, and his one real experiment in education was, from the outside point of view, a

failure. And yet Mr. Richmond and I are agreed that Ford had a rare genius, and that even the little we may be able to record of his life and principles has a peculiar value at the present time, and will have a still greater value a few years hence. We have, in fact, the prevailing excuse that this sketch of Ford's life is in the best and widest sense of the word—didactic. We sincerely believe that his theories of education and conduct are worthy of the closest attention.

Nevertheless, to be quite honest, the inducement that led me to accept a share in this book when my friend Kenneth Richmond suggested the experiment, was not afforded by the considerations I have just advanced. Those came later, when my collaborator and I had seriously to consider the possibility of our book being published. In the first place, I was tempted by a recognition of the fact that Ford's theories seemed already to be spreading abroad. In art, in fiction, in philosophy, in sociology, and even in such sciences as psychology, I was being constantly confronted with a half-grasped assumption that I recognised as having some sort of relation with the speculations of Ford.

To a certain extent this has no doubt arisen from my own attitude of expectation. I have found the thing I looked for, and perhaps exaggerated the significance of the indications. But I am convinced that when every allowance has been made for my

personal prejudice, sufficient evidence remains to prove that civilisation is moving towards the development of a new expression in religion.

Briefly and very indefinitely stated, this change is from a negative to a positive attitude towards God; from a morality that depends upon repression to one that depends upon the liberation of impulse.

I can well imagine that the captious will at once expostulate that this principle is as old as history; that it has been attempted in practice and has led to nothing but licence, debauchery and collapse. Further, that it is the 'excuse' of every artist—an amoral creature by hypothesis—and was the foundation of Nietzsche's cruel and subversive philosophy.

My single reply to these objections practically covers the whole ground. It rests upon the assertion that by the liberation of impulse or free expression, Ford intended not the impulses and expressions of animal desires, but those of what he calls the 'primitive urge behind life.' And this differentiation becomes important when we realise that he regarded that urge as invariably tending towards development, even if such development might not, under present conditions, be generally recognised as 'goodness' in the sense of conventional morality. In effect he had a higher opinion of the universal content than had Nietzsche. Ford, himself, was the exponent of a naturally moral tendency, and he had faith in the virtue of his own impulses as the delivery of an essentially beneficial

urge. He might perhaps have defined his aim as the will to expression; he would certainly not have defined it as the will to power.

But if he had gone still further and accepted the definition of goodness commonly assumed by the churches, his principle would still have differed radically from theirs. For the practice of all present day religions is founded on the commandments beginning 'thou shalt *not*,' treating God as law-giver and judge, a creature swift to anger and to condemnation. And Ford intuitively rejected a process of virtue that advanced by elimination; as though 'goodness' were a liquor that must be endlessly strained and refined. He preferred in all his analogies some figure that presented the thought of encouragement and growth; and I think that by developing 'free expression,' he may have meant that we should concentrate our energies on the delivery of the finer impulses rather than on the suppression of the baser. I say he may have intended this, but I have been greatly handicapped by the fact that I have no written material of his, not so much as a single note. For all my exposition, I have had to depend on my memory of a few discussions between us (one of them lasted for five hours), and I find it exceedingly difficult, now, to separate my own contribution to his theory of life. Ford was so apparently ductible in argument. He had a wonderful gift for making one state his own point of view. If he had been more

dogmatic, my present task would have been an easier one. . . .

But I am afraid that I am laying too much stress on philosophy in this introduction, forasmuch as the greater part of the book—all Mr. Richmond's contribution, in fact—will hardly touch on that development of Ford's thought. Without question Ford's first claim to attention is as a pioneer in education, and I do not wish for a moment to put that claim in the background. At the same time I feel that I am not a reliable exponent of the educational theory and method which are elucidated in some detail by Mr. Richmond in chapters iv.-x. My hesitation in this is due to a realisation that while I have had no experience that qualifies me to give an opinion, I am an ardent enthusiast for the principles Ford endeavoured to put into practice. And as your professional educationist has little tolerance for lay enthusiasm, I am particularly anxious not to prejudice him from the outset by a discussion of technicalities which might betray my ignorance. Nevertheless, education enters the province that I have made my own in this experimental biography ; and in that connection I feel entitled to express a general opinion that involves no discussion of detail.

For I see that any hope for a practical exposition of Ford's philosophy will be found in the schoolroom. Few adults are teachable, but most children. And I believe that many enlightened educationists are

beginning to grasp the truth that the road to knowledge is not by the way of memorising facts, but by the understanding and *relation* of facts. The obvious difficulty which, as Mr. Richmond shows, confronts the pioneer of this theory, is the argument that a truly synthetic education does not fit a child to enter the commercial and competitive conditions of modern life. There may be practical means of overcoming this difficulty. I leave that to the expert. But my own hope is founded on the belief that the children of the new race will alter the conditions. If we have faith in Ford's theories of education, philosophy and morals, we must be courageous enough to risk the immediate financial success of the younger generations.

Before I leave this introduction, I want to make two further comments ; and the first is with reference to the great European War. Ford died before August 1914, and I have, therefore, no direct opinion of his with regard to it ; but I think his probable attitude can be quite definitely inferred.

Personally, I regard this war as evidencing the final failure of the Christian principle of suppression. How far that principle derives from Christ and not from the embroideries of the theologian, I have no time to discuss. The one absurd justification for fighting which has been advanced by the churches, rests on the text, ' I came to bring not peace but a sword,' a statement conflicting so intolerably with

Christ's general doctrine, that we can only suppose it to have been either an interpolation by a later hand, or, as seems more probable, a prophecy and not an affirmation of purpose. In any case the quotation of this one text is obviously futile as a defence. It cannot be separated from the body of Christ's teaching. And I maintain that the man who attempts to justify his attitude as a militant with his attitude towards Christianity, is incapable of intellectual or spiritual honesty. If he believes that England was bound in honour to intervene in the first place, to carry on the struggle by every means in her power, and finally to continue it until she is able to dictate the terms of peace, then let that man be honest enough to admit that the ethic of Christianity is not applicable to present conditions. That conclusion, as I have said, is my own, but I know that Ford would have agreed with me.

I believe that this war was necessary, and I believe that it will be beneficial to mankind as a whole. It has arisen, all modern wars have arisen, from individual and national inhibitions. Suppression and concealment are the common tools of all diplomacy. Race hatreds and jealousies arise only from misunderstandings and cowardice. Everywhere the influence of the old principle of thrusting down evil rather than encouraging good, has led to morbid desires and national hysteria. And beyond a certain point, the national body must rid itself of these morbid secre-

tions or go mad. Germany had reached her limit of endurance, and her hysteria has found an expression in her hatred of England—the forced, unnatural expression of the thwarted. Nevertheless, there is a hope that this war will act as a purge that will enable Europe for a time to see more clearly. Already there is a faintly discernible movement towards a greater honesty; towards liberation. But only by the education of children on new lines will this slight gain be made good. If we are in future to teach the fundamental ethic of Christianity, it must be restated. It is useless for us to love our enemies, if we must first learn to hate ourselves. If the Pharisee's self-righteousness was false, so also was the self-abasement of the publican. . . .

My second comment is an anticipation of the conventional test that will surely be applied to Ford. If he was such a great man, the critic will say, how is it that he had no influence on his contemporaries? My reply is, firstly, that he had considerable influence on his immediate circle—as this little endeavour to interpret him ought to demonstrate. And, secondly, that this influence was restricted simply because he had no craze for publicity. For while he was singularly free from any affectation of modesty, he had none of the convinced self-righteousness of the propagandist. He lived his own philosophy by simply being himself—an uncommonly hard, perhaps an impossible, task for any public man in modern conditions. Possibly

W. E. Gladstone came as near the ideal as any prominent statesman of recent years.

In conclusion, I relinquish, with a sigh of dissatisfaction, this task of trying to present Ford. I feel that I have failed to render him with anything approaching justice; and I console myself with the reflection that Mr. Richmond's chapters on education are a real contribution to knowledge. We have candidly admitted, Richmond and I, that this book is an experiment, and that we are none too pleased with the form it has taken. But while Ford's philosophy may need endless elaboration, his educational theory and practice are, we feel assured, the methods of the future—let us hope of the immediate future.

CHAPTER II

I FIRST met Ford on the evening of the 22nd of June 1897. He, like myself, had taken advantage of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations to escape from London ; but his purpose and mine had little in common.

I was working in an architect's office in Moorgate Street at that time ; and as pageants and processions have never interested me (I lived for eighteen consecutive years in London without seeing a Lord Mayor's Show), I had profited by the holiday to go up the river for three days with a friend from the office, and his brother, a sailor in the merchant service. After a damp, depressing Sunday that was impossible for boating, we had a very good holiday. By a fluke we saw the Queen leave Windsor on Monday morning—we had gone up into the town to buy provisions—and on the day of the procession we had a long jolly day sailing down from Bray to Halliford, which had been our point of departure. My two companions were returning to town that night, but they advised me to stay down at Shepperton. My friend from the office was always very thoughtful for me, and he was afraid that there might be great crowds in the street to see the illuminations, and that I, with my game

leg, might find some difficulty in getting back to my lodgings near King's Cross.

So I stayed the night at the Railway Hotel at Shepperton—a queer little inn kept by a Swiss named Aubert. And it was there that I met Ford.

He was the only other visitor, and according to the etiquette of the Auberts (I stayed there many times afterwards) he had a right to the use of the dark little sitting-room by virtue of the fact of his prior arrival. I was introduced by permission, chiefly on the ground, I fancy, that this was a special occasion. The common meeting place of the inn's visitors was a little parlour behind the bar.

It must have been nearly nine o'clock when I was introduced to Ford by Mrs. Aubert, who was English and phlegmatic, although she always wore an air of being slightly offended, even by the most reasonable, not to say profitable, request. I was probably presented as 'another gentleman'; and her 'if you wouldn't mind 'is 'aving supper in 'ere,' was spoken, no doubt, with her usual effect of faint resentment. To me, she had spoken of the occupant of the sitting-room as if he had been the great Panjandrum himself. I had felt that my intrusion was quite unwarranted, until I in turn figured as 'another gentleman' with suggested rights and dignities.

The lamp was lighted—it was dark in that room at midday; either the Swiss or the English influence insisted on two pairs of curtains and a lace muslin

blind for the insufficient window—and as Ford got up when I was presented, his face was in the shadow of the painted cardboard lampshade when he answered. I thought him a little morose. He mumbled something that I did not catch.

I was twenty-four then, and had much the same illusions with regard to chance meetings that H. G. Wells has described as those of Mr. Polly. I looked forward to them romantically, but unlike Mr. Polly I saw my own part as furnishing the effective element of surprise. I based my dreaming on that episode described by Borrow in *The Bible in Spain*; and in my adaptation of the incident, I imaginatively tramped England in corduroys and hobnails, and astounded some travelling scholar by an erudition greater than his own. I must add, however, that my erudition was non-existent—I invented that.

And my first impressions of Ford, and our earlier conversation that night, were slightly prejudiced by this attitude of mine. I was only an architect's assistant on a salary of £2, 10s. a week, and I wanted to pretend that I was something more than that.

After Mrs. Aubert had gone to get my inevitable bacon and eggs, I started a man-of-the-world conversation with a criticism of her manner. Ford was not responsive. I *was* an egregious young ass; and he was shy with casual strangers, and must from the outset have been prepared for boredom. The effect

of his polite replies, however, produced a result he had not designed.

I have always been very sensitive to criticism. Any one can shut me up in conversation. Underneath that romantic desire to shine in any society, I carry the knowledge of my own incapacity; a knowledge that I have ever candidly faced and admitted in the secret colloquies of myself and my own mind. And Ford, who was also a sensitive creature of another type, discerned my hurt when I suddenly lapsed into a shamed silence; and he sought to repair his fault by beginning to talk.

I did not see at the time how that opening of an acquaintance displayed an essential difference between him and me. We were both shy and sensitive, but my eyes were turned inwards, his outwards. When he did not respond, I began to criticise my own feebleness; and if our positions had been reversed, I should never have discerned, as he did, the reason for the silence that threatened to fall upon us. Again, where I should have reflected the inferred attitude of my company, he retained his individuality, and sought to examine the character of those with whom he was confronted. His sympathies never influenced him, as my sympathies influence me, to act a part.

He began to talk about the river, and I responded to that. I know the river well, and my replies at first were, I suspect, largely topographical—another boast of knowledge. But presently he touched me

to hesitating confidences. There were things I had felt about the Thames that I could never confess to any of my friends in the office; things that I had no language to explain to them or, indeed, to any one. And Ford's genius, in some wonderful way, perceived the beginnings of those perceptions in me. He touched, by way of opening, on the history of the river, of the old encampment at Sinodun Hill, for instance; and then dared to expose the sensitive skin of my romantic temperament by asking me if I had ever seen the mysteries that descend upon the 'depths of water stilled at even.'

My reply was inadequate. I knew, but I had no words to tell my knowledge. I was confused because I realised my inability to describe my emotions. And I was horribly handicapped by my desire to prove that I was capable of appreciating his suggestions. The line from *The Blessed Damozel* was unknown to me, although from his delivery I recognised it as a quotation.

Nevertheless, I began to expand. I described an adventure I and two other men had had at Sutton Courtney, when after a long day of rain and wind, we had crept up the backwater at sunset to find a camping ground, and had come wonderfully upon an old mill, and floated into an enceinte of high resonant walls that filled us with a fear of our own whispering voices.

I put the story into clumsy, colloquial phrases that

conveyed nothing of the place nor of my own feelings; but Ford understood.

And from that we came to a discussion of literature, spoiled at first by the remains of my romantic desire to appear well-read. I tried to make the best of the little reading I had, but it was hopelessly inadequate, and when I found myself referring all his openings to my limited authorities, I honestly shifted my ground and confessed my lack of education. Ford had put me almost at my ease by then.

The confession was not a new one, but it had often taken the form of a boast. Chronologically it ran: Four years at a dame's school; a year and a half at Oundle under Mungo Park; four months at home with occasional lessons from a neighbouring parson who was trying to educate his own son; one term at a private school in Norfolk; and finally, four terms at the King's School, Peterborough, before, at sixteen, I began the first approach to architecture by studying building construction at the Peterborough Art School. As a matter of fact I was not yet seventeen when my first set of articles was signed with the Diocesan Surveyor, whose offices at Stamford—eight miles from my home—I visited three times a week for nearly two years. It was a fair subject for boast, that haphazard education, calculated to develop nothing so much as the habit of slacking. I always left my listener to draw his own inference; but my usual attitude of 'Here I am' was, on this occasion, perhaps, a trifle

plaintive. I may have been uncertain whether my point of arrival was not the too obvious result of my lack of training.

Ford overlooked the effect. He was interested in the cause and began to question me. And if I was somewhat eager for the final verdict, for some assurance that I had emerged creditably from this welter of various disciplines, I was flattered by his interest, and proud to answer his questions with a readiness that displayed my own criticism of the scholastic methods I had suffered. The verdict never came. In place of that, he opened my eyes to possibilities I had never then considered.

His suggestions came to me then in the guise of a revelation; not because he threw them off with any air of being sent to lighten my darkness, but because my mind was ready to take his point of view. I was suddenly hungry for this new food, although I had not before been aware of any appetite.

It is difficult now to separate the particular suggestions he made that night from the completer argument I heard him set out in later conversations; but certain of his simpler theses must have been touched upon at our first meeting. Indeed, it seems to me that I can recall precisely the tones of his clear, gentle voice, a little muffled by the apparatus of hangings in that dark sitting-room—even the fireplace was elaborately hung and curtained. We had finished supper and he was sitting on the sofa, his face a little

in the shadow. And, to me, the voice was the mouthpiece of an oracle that amazingly delivered the stifled knowledge of my subconscious thought.

No doubt the rendering is characteristically my own, and Richmond, who was Ford's disciple in a sense that I never could be, will perhaps object that my translation has lost the spirit of the original. Nevertheless, I do not think that my perversions and remodellings will seriously misrepresent Ford's general attitude. If they do, I commend a study of Richmond's chapters as more likely to display the inwardness of these theories than my own personal reactions to what appeared, most hopefully at the time, as a new doctrine; even the radical openings of Froebel and Herbart were quite unknown to me at the age of twenty-four.

For Ford began, at first tentatively, and afterwards with an increased precision, to put before me the possibility that my scattered education had saved me from many of the intellectual vices which might have arisen from the discipline of a single dogmatic method. He suggested that all my various new starts and uncompleted exercises had been preparing me to accept knowledge, while they had mercifully left me without prejudice in favour of a specialised course. He made me realise that the structure of knowledge is ever the same, that Euclid is a preparation for the study of botany, or Greek inflections for the writing of English prose. He used a physical analogy to illustrate that thesis under my hesitating recognition, and gave me

a picture of a finely trained muscular system, quick and adaptable ; a tool competent for any specialisation, if specialisation were ultimately the goal of a particular education.

I grasped that figure with the objection that my mind had not been trained in all its parts, that there were functions which had been wholly neglected, and he met me with the quiet reply that he was not maintaining a case for the haphazard, but merely for a principle more nearly approached in my case than it would have been if I had stayed seven years at a typical public school of the period.

'You had some kind of chance,' he said—a sentence that stuck in my memory. It came to me as a revelation, just then, that there were other forms of cleverness besides the ability to discuss the classics. I had always admired sound scholarship; I do still ; but Ford confirmed the hope that scholarship was not the beginning and end of wisdom. Before I met him that hope had been a vague thing which sometimes took the appropriate form of an anchor, but at other times wore the semblance of a snare, the pitiful excuse of one who knew all too surely that scholarship could never be within his reach.

My 'chance,' as I inferred from Ford's further conversation, lay in my undestroyed capacity for synthesis. I—he took me merely as an instance—could still approach knowledge without bias. What I had learned in spite of my training had provided me

with a basis. My little Latin and less Greek were enough to furnish me with a better touchstone than that I should have had if I had concentrated on them to the neglect of all those other branches of knowledge.

I remember that he turned aside to dismiss that metaphor. 'You have avoided one danger,' was the gist of his speech, 'the danger of regarding one particular subject as the root and trunk of all learning. But one can't think of knowledge as a tree,' he went on; 'it would be a very queer kind of tree, wouldn't it, with a different sort of fruit on every branch? And all of them springing, according to the classicists, from the single root and trunk of the dead languages.'

I forget, now, the detail of his enlargement, and even whether he found another metaphor to take the place of the one he had discarded. What I recall seems, in the light of subsequent illuminations, to have been very elementary stuff indeed, nothing more than a disposal, before my receptive but untrained eyes, of principles that even the modern academic admits with a petulant reluctance. Nevertheless, they were principles that at once roused my ignorant enthusiasm, and I received them as new-found truths that would presently revolutionise the whole system of education. It was a revelation to me that school subjects should not be studied in sealed compartments; that 'history' and 'geography' might go hand in hand, and that they were the basis of economics, or that the story of Cæsar's campaigns might be made a vital link of

connection between Mediterranean history and the history of continental Europe. (It is, indeed, a shameful fact that I could not then have indicated France, Belgium, Switzerland or Germany in any organic relation to the Gallic wars. I wonder if your average Eton boy is much better informed at the present day?)

All the substance of that night's conversation has gone back, now, into the dull store of accepted things. It may be that I have not Ford's gift for keeping bright the structure of belief. He approached me on our first meeting with the keenness of the recent discoverer; yet even then, his material must have been far from new to him. I, in his place, should have been wearied with the necessity for stating axioms, annoyed by the foolish unreadiness of my listener. But that was a gift of his. His problem never lost freshness; he found new interest in the reflections of each new listener. For him each pupil was a fresh disclosure of the eternal miracle.

We were coming within sight of that aspect of him when Mrs. Aubert finally drove us up to bed. He had been talking of the preparation of a mind to accept instruction, and then he looked at me with a faintly whimsical smile as if for the first time he touched upon some subject just precious enough to make him a little self-conscious. 'You only have to help a boy to dig the stuff up,' he said, 'help him to *remember*, you know.' And his inflection of the word remember told

me that he used it in a sense I was able to recognise. I had read Plato's *Dialogues* in an English translation, and the 'Meno' had left a distinct impression on my mind. My use of that little piece of erudition, however, chilled our closing relations. Perhaps I had a sense of recovered standing, or I may have realised that I had offered no positive contribution to the conversation for a long time. But I need not dwell on my interruption, and I have long since abandoned my argument against Socrates' theory of latent knowledge. Ford did not take up my weak little challenge of materialism. No one knew better than he did, how great a waste of time it is to argue with an obstinate or momentarily elated opponent. No 'remembering' comes that way.

We should certainly have recovered our understanding, if it had not been for Mrs. Aubert, but after a casual interruption at half-past ten to remind us that this was their closing time, she came in again a few minutes before eleven and asked us frankly if we were not going to bed. I was inclined to resent her interference, but Ford quietly submitted.

I carried to bed with me a disturbing doubt as to whether he had not been relieved by our landlady's interruption. My eternal self-depreciation suggested that despite his appearance of interest he had, in fact, been bored by my company. I saw myself, painfully, as the young ass who had begun by attempting a ridiculous boast of knowledge.

That doubt, however, did not dominate me. If I remembered my attempted effect of scholarship with uneasiness, I was still warm with an appreciation of Ford's contribution to the conversation, and glad to remember that I had achieved an ultimate honesty. And I gave Ford place, that night, on my list of heroes; that list of mine which never records more than one name at a time. There have been so many whom I have known and revered for months or, in some cases, for years. They begin, as Ford began, by appearing so astonishingly greater than myself. And they maintain their place, until I come to criticism, until by some slow reaction of thought or attitude I find the comparison between their abilities and my own does not invariably yield so great a balance in their favour. But I dare not examine that complex characteristic of mine, it demands a greater consideration than I can give it in this place. I mention it only because it is a necessary test of my earlier relations with Ford.

In this case the beginnings of hero-worship are reasonably obvious, if we assume in the postulant the temperament that inclines him to accept new doctrines. And although, as a matter of mere chronology, Ford was my senior by no more than three years, he was curiously older than I was. He certainly looked more than twenty-seven when I first met him. He was wearing a beard at that time, and that gave him, in my eyes, the dignity and prestige of a full-grown man—

a prestige of which I have never become aware in myself. (At forty-four I am invariably surprised when some youngster of twenty-five or so evidences any sign of respect for my years.) But mere appearance counts for very little, and I recognised very soon the many points of Ford's superiority to myself. He had travelled, he had read, he knew something about life. Up to the time of his death, I was never quite his contemporary.

And so, since I had a vacancy just then, I instated Ford as hero ; and if I am to be honest in giving my impressions of him, I must admit that in those earlier years he seemed to me to tower.

CHAPTER III

I SEEM to have put a halo round that first meeting with Ford; and now that I come to reflect on the later relations between us, I am a little handicapped by a very natural desire to retain that glory, at least in the form of a permanent nimbus for my hero. I perfectly understand at this moment why the biographer should so often appear as a lopsided optimist. The desire I mentioned urges me to glorify my subject because it affords me the opportunity of making something; and that particular form of creation is easier by far than understanding. If I were writing this book alone, —a task for which I have no qualifications—I should certainly romanticise Ford, and end by presenting a consistent, and possibly an admirable portrait of an imaginary creature who bore a generic resemblance to the original, but would hardly be recognised by his friends. As it is, I am only contributing a few chapters to Mr. Richmond's work, and he will, I know, be ruthless in his criticism. I submit that my task is a hard one for the mere novelist; and claim a special measure of toleration on that account. Lastly—to end an apology that has been wrung from me by an hour of unprofitable contemplation, spent in staring with

growing despondency at a sheet of paper bearing the repulsive heading 'Chapter III.' and nothing more—I must insist on one, as it seems to me, almost insuperable difficulty. In a novel the characters are invariably simplified. The most complex character in fiction is more reasonable and consistent than the average member of one's daily acquaintance. And in planning and working out a novel, one can satisfactorily invent reasons and explanations. In a biography one is permitted to suppress but not to invent.

The stumbling-block that led to my hour's waste of time and this subsequent apology, is my complete inability to account, in any way convincingly, for the fact that after our Jubilee night at Halliford, I did not meet Ford again for three years; and met him then by the merest accident. I knew that it must seem, to put it mildly, highly improbable that I should not have written to him. I had, indeed, promised to write and fix an appointment with him in the City, and I wore the envelope on which his address was scribbled, until the pencilled writing was an almost undecipherable blur. There is only one explanation possible—I was like that in those days. I had conceived an enthusiasm for Ford; and every time that, in my enforced evacuations of rubbish, I came across that particular envelope (I used to stuff letters in my pockets until the lining went), I wrote to him long, rather literary letters—in my mind. None of them was ever put on paper. That was one of my particular weaknesses. I have

criminally shirked the payment of a debt I honestly longed to settle, because I could not summon resolution to do the thing at the moment. And, in the same way, I have deliberately walked past the door of a shop to which I had come in order to buy something I, perhaps, urgently required. At the last moment, it seemed to me that to-morrow would do better for my purchase. After these instances it will, I hope, be just comprehensible that I put off my letter to Ford indefinitely.

But, Destiny—for no particular purpose that I can trace—planned with a delicate accuracy that I should meet Ford in London Wall during my lunch time, some three years or so after our first meeting—an accident that so far affected my life to a just appreciable extent. The year of that second meeting was, I know, 1900, because we discussed the Boer War a few days later ; and the peculiar phase of that struggle, my certainty that it was summer, and that, for reasons which will appear later, it could not have been the summer of 1901, afford evidence to fix the date fairly accurately.

Ford had a beautiful lady with him when we met in London Wall. I was not introduced, but she considerably distracted my attention. And as Richmond is reasonably certain that the lady must have been Miss Worthington, it may be interesting to record a brief impression of my one glimpse of her. She was tall, taller than Ford, and fair ; and her features had

the wonderful effect of being chiselled or modelled with the careful art of a realist sculptor—the effect which is hardly ever found in the pretty women of the lower and middle classes in England. I certainly took her for an aristocrat, and worshipped her image for a time. She took not the least notice of me, I remember; no doubt she resented my interruption of her conversation with Ford.

I should probably not have recognised him if he had not hailed me by name. He had shaved his beard and moustache, and he looked younger than my acquaintance of three years before. He instantly remembered me, and, moreover, all the circumstances of our first meeting. 'You promised to write,' he reminded me. 'I suppose you lost my address?'

And that remark led to one of the real situations which one *can* use in fiction, inasmuch as my characteristic inability to tell the easy untruth on such occasions was quite a factor in my further intimacy with Ford. My stammering reply to the effect that I still had his address in my pocket, that I had meant and wanted to write, and that I had been, as usual, a 'rotten slacker,' quickened his interest in me to the point of making an appointment at the Café Nero in the Wool Exchange, for the following day. I chose the rendezvous. And he told me there that my rather elaborate honesty and self-condemnation had piqued his curiosity.

Nevertheless, our friendship ripened very slowly.

I met him three or four times in the next nine months, always at the same place ; and I was intensely interested in him, but I regarded him as a rather superior being, and felt that it was not for me to suggest such further intimacies as, say, a long evening's conversation at his rooms or mine.

Then in the summer of 1901, I entered upon what I now recognise as the second phase of my life. The development of the phase was gradual, but the change of interests and associations was instant ; and drastic enough in certain ways to throw my acquaintance with Ford momentarily into the background. I did not forget him, but I forgot to meet him. Also my employer moved his offices from Moorgate Street to Bedford Square in the spring of that year, and my associations with Ford were, save for our first meeting, all connected with the great underground café in the Wool Exchange building.

I must, however, note one strange anomaly by the way. When I was in the City, as I have said, I met Ford by chance in London Wall, although I rarely went down that street and he was there by the merest accident. Now, during the whole of 1902 Ford was living within half a mile of the office in which I was working, constantly passed it and spent a great part of his time in the British Museum, which I, in my turn, passed at least twice every day in my walk from my room in Montague Street to my office in Bedford Square. And yet, during those twelve months, I

never once caught sight of him. The facts of life are so improbable.

The causes that led to our next meeting were not, strictly speaking, fortuitous. I had remembered his Bloomsbury address all this time, although I had neither written to him nor been to see him. My lack of enterprise in this case, however, is quite explicable. I had an exigeante 'interest' that occupied all my spare time.

But I have come to a period of my own life that even now, after a lapse of more than eleven years, I recall with very considerable distaste. I do not propose to enter into that history; but I may explain that I left my job as an architect's assistant at the end of September 1903, and joined the New York Life Insurance Company as an agent; that I was married for the first time in November of the same year and went to live in a flat in Buckingham Gate; and that early in 1904, in a desperate search for probable 'cases,' I remembered Ford and wrote to him on the off chance of finding in him a willing and insurable risk. The address found him, as he had returned then to his old rooms in Bloomsbury. I suppose I mentioned my object in writing to him; I am sure that I did not insure him. I was always too bitterly ashamed of my occupation to press even the most likely 'case' among my acquaintances.

I have been drawn into these apparently irrelevant details of autobiography by my attempt to recover

a true sense of my early relations with Ford; the phase that lasted, almost unchanged, until the winter of 1911-1912, when he was home again in Golden Square after spending six months in India. During all this period we met infrequently. There were enormous intervals due to the adventures of the various life which beset me when I, finally, broke away from the shackles of my office routine. But whenever we did meet my attitude towards him remained that of pupil to master—an attitude that I learned later was the real obstacle between us.

In those days I failed completely to understand him. I put him too high, and never once realised that my reverence irked and a little dismayed him. And so I have found it impossible to explain my impressions of that time without first laying stress on my own weakness. For it was not Ford whom I knew, but my own thought of him; and my thought was a false one. I used to go to him for advice, as a pious spinster goes to her parish priest; and like the spinster, I was always attempting to win admiration by a confession of weakness. I was the victim of that common romantic ideal which seeks to create the illusion of absolutes. Conscious of my own inabilities, I tried to find in Ford the absolute strength and wisdom, in order that I might shift the responsibility of my life to his ordinance. I went to him for advice, and if he had given me a rule I should have obeyed it.

I remember very vividly the last instance of those

visits to my lay confessional; a visit made at a time when things were going very badly indeed with me. Ford was married then and living at his school in Holland Park. I think I must have written to him and made an appointment. I know that after a few minutes in the drawing-room he took me upstairs to his own study. I have always had an idea that Mrs. Ford did not like me.[1] I certainly never made any of my confessions in her presence, and assumed—with good justification, I believe—that they were never reported to her by Ford himself.

My financial and marital complications were rapidly becoming disastrous, and I put them before Ford in the tentative, half-despairing manner that was symptomatic of my condition just then; finding a salve, even while I complained, in his quick, sympathetic interest. But when I came to a pause, he got up and began to pace the little length of his study. He had decided to make an end of these old relations between us, not for any selfish reason, but simply because he believed that I might still save my life from wreck. And his first sentence put the whole situation before me in the fewest possible words.

'*You* must be God,' he said. '*I* can't.'

But I was not quick enough to grasp the full significance of that, and the explanation that followed was, in one sense, of quite peculiar interest. For he told me, some four years later, that during the elaboration of

[1] Mrs. Ford denies this.—K. R.

that simple, intuitive statement of his, he approached for the first time the primitive conception of that philosophy which I hope, however imperfectly, to indicate in a further chapter.

No doubt my memory of his first exposition is confused now with many subsequent conversations, but I remember the effect that his talk had upon me, and it seems worth while to attempt some reproduction of his advice.

He began by censuring my inhibitions. I was all for sacrifice at that time. I had made a mistake in my first marriage, and my single idea was not so much to make the best of it as to penalise myself for having been a fool. I believed that I was being a little splendid by patiently suffering the effects of my folly.

Ford told me that I was denying God ; that every time I suppressed my inclination to resent the lash, I was weakening a natural impulse. And the effect of that, he said, was even worse for my wife than it was for myself ; since I encouraged her natural cruelty, when by resistance, by a free expression of my impulsive reactions, I might stimulate in her a free response to other complexes. She could not be 'all-cruel,' he said, the thing was unthinkable ; but by my feeble submissions I was developing that side of her character out of all proportion.

Then he went on to urge that what I regarded as a fine ideal of self-sacrifice might be, in effect, nothing more than a sop for my moral cowardice. Would it

not need a greater effort on my part, he asked, to go boldly home and admit to my wife that I no longer loved her? Would it not need more courage, more self-control, to speak the whole truth, than it would to endure my present misery with a show of meekness? If you really want to sacrifice yourself, choose the hardest way, was the summary of his argument.

I believe that talk of his was the beginning of many things for him, but while he was speaking he had no thought for anything but me. As his manner was on those occasions, he constantly looked up at me quickly, earnestly, and yet with an air that was a trifle abstracted, as if his physical approach of sight was no more than a mechanical aid to his spiritual approach. He used to find some inner contact with one in those more earnest moments of his. He reached out and entered one's mind. And he read me so clearly and effectively on this particular occasion, that he was able to build a philosophy out of the experience gained by his instant's surrender to another personality. He reached my thought and then stood back to prescribe for me.

At the last, he completed his effort by giving me something of his own confidence. He told me that he believed I should 'come through.' The phrase remained with me, for I made it a watchword; although with a quick turn that was a trifle whimsical, he went on at once: 'If it is ourselves that come through, and not the universal behind us?' I cannot

pretend to remember his precise words but the intention is that which he conveyed to my mind. He went on to question how far this complex that we recognise as our personality may be merely a means for the expression of some universal that continually seeks to be delivered.

I went home wonderfully conscious that I was an agent for the deliverance of eternal truth; and if the purpose of my endeavour failed grievously when the exhilaration of new knowledge had spent itself in conflict with the insistent realities of my condition, I had, as it were, opened another line of communication with God.

To that extent Ford influenced my life, and justified my belief in the Destiny which planned our first two meetings with such fastidious unconcern. But after I had received the intended stimulus, Destiny shrugged its shoulders and left me, so far as Ford was concerned, to take any further initiative on my own account.

We did not meet again for four years, and during the interval I had entered upon my 'third phase,' the phase that still endures.

It was in November 1911 that I got a letter from Ford, sent on by my publishers, congratulating me on my book, *The Hampdenshire Wonder*. I have kept that letter, and it now lies open before me, but I cannot very well quote it in full. When Ford found occasion for praise, his enthusiasm shone out with no shadow of qualification. Also, there was an element of pleased

surprise in this particular expression of his—he must have been more than a little astonished at the evidence of my having 'come through' so soon. Nevertheless, because no one but Ford ever saw and stated definitely my half-realised purpose in writing *The Hampdenshire Wonder,* I will copy out just that part of his eulogy which made me glad to have made the attempt.

'It has got there completely so far as I am concerned,' he wrote. 'In detail it satisfies innumerable instincts, mathematical, metaphysical, psychological, and so on . . . and in general it does what very few books have done—Stevenson's *Jekyll and Hyde* is one—abstracts one of the fundamental antinomies of human life, drives the paradox to the extreme conceivable limit without loss of the necessary degree of credibility, and—leaves the moral to be inferred. The practical result is material for fruitful thought, and we can't thank a man for any better gift.'

A little further down he completes my own feeling of purpose, by congratulating me on 'a certain sense of half contact with the illimitable,' that I had somehow managed to achieve in the book he was praising.

If I had never met Ford and had had no other letter from him than this one, I should have known that he had a rare gift of understanding. It may be, of course, that in the old days of our intercourse he realised something in me of which I myself was quite unaware, and so saw through the book to the author.

But if that be the explanation it still credits him with a most unusual power of insight, inasmuch as no one else believed in me during that 'second phase.'

We met several times that winter in Golden Square, and twice he came up to our tiny flat in Willesden Lane. We had suddenly become equals and could talk. For Ford, himself, could talk as an equal with any man, from the most brutal uneducated to the ripest philosopher, and it was only such as I, and as my antithesis the complacent overbearing, who set up the obstacle of difference.

It will be evident from this brief account of my relations with Ford how little I knew of his personal history. All that far more interesting matter will be set out by Mr. Richmond, who knew the man and his habits of thought so intimately. But what I have been attempting is to prelude the historical, mobile account of Ford's life with an impression that would be relatively reflective and static. When I began my contribution I intended to describe Ford as I would describe a character in a novel; I thought that I would try to make a picture of him by setting down his characteristic tricks of phrase and gesture, and perhaps work in a suggestive anecdote or two. When I had actually begun my task, I realised that this was not my part of the collaboration, it was Richmond's. And now it seems to me that I have written much of myself and very little of Ford. The reflex must be found in a consideration of opposites; in the thought

of a man who was not introspective; and was not concerned with the effect of life upon himself, but with his hope to affect life.

All writers of fiction are to some extent charlatans, and most of them are aware of the fact. Introspection inevitably leads to self-consciousness and hypocrisy. The antithesis is found in the man who does not examine his own motives; and Ford came nearer to the ideal in this kind than any one I have ever met. I told him, once—only a few weeks before he left England on his fateful journey to Japan—that he completely begged the question of his own character; that he was an a priorist in living. He thought that over for a couple of seconds before he replied, and then said, 'Yes, I dare say that 's true. I certainly know less of myself than I do of many of my friends. I don't find myself interesting.' And for that reason, although he found the whole of the rest of life quite absorbingly interesting, he would never have made a novelist or a writer of philosophy. For a man must be on the friendliest terms with himself before he can make the abstract which is necessary to both these avocations. Ford did not deal in crystallisations. He had no inclination for that integration of the various through the alembic of his own microcosm. He kept his vision of life fluid, and many people blamed him as lacking in consideration. His whole tendency was synthetic. And that process I have described, with no intention of preserving an accurate chemical

analogy, as 'crystallisation,' necessitates separation, analysis.

Indeed, I think that his treatment of me on that last occasion of our unequal contact in the parts of penitent and confessor, is, on the whole, respectably typical of his method with life. Another man in his place would have tested my case on his own character. He would have asked himself, 'What should I do in such circumstances?' Ford's only criterion was what he knew of my disposition and abilities. He tried to project himself into my mind, and I feel that he almost wonderfully succeeded.

One result of that characteristic of his was that a majority of his casual acquaintances regarded Ford as rather an egotist. He was, as a matter of fact, a selfless rather than an unselfish man. He was so unself-conscious, both in giving and taking, that I cannot imagine him deliberately sacrificing himself to give pleasure. The mere act of deliberation would imply in that case the choice and acceptance of a part, and he never postured. It was, so to speak, almost an accident that he gave pleasure rather than pain to his friends; it happened that his essential attitude was one of interest rather than one of criticism.

And my last excuse for the manner of this chapter may rest on the fact that I have tried to show what kind of man—as a single instance among many kinds—could engage and hold his interest. I feel an urgent desire to praise him for not wearying of me. I believe

that his comprehension of me is a splendid testimonial for his abilities as an educationist and a sociologist.

For the rest, I have spoken of his other claims to a wide attention both in my first chapter and in the collocation of various notes I made on the broader scheme of philosophy he was just beginning to outline when he died. In the latter, more especially, will be found much that is a clue to his general character. I leave it to Mr. Richmond to give a completer study of Ford's life, and hope that that study will not contradict my statement in any important particular. Nevertheless, if another reading should show him in other, and apparently almost irreconcilable, aspects, the fact will only serve to prove that my estimate is a true one. Ford's 'selflessness' will bear many translations.

PART II

A BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

By Kenneth Richmond

CHAPTER IV

The biographer of a famous or a notorious character has to deal with an advantage and a disadvantage combined. The advantage is that he starts in rapport with the reader over a certain popular conception of his subject; the disadvantage is that this is always more or less of a misconception, since the public man who does not wear a mask of set intention is always fitted with a mask by the public. And it is a risky undertaking, as Beresford has hinted, to lift the mask. As I set myself to write down the main details of Ford's life, I am glad that there is no popular picture of him, no accepted set of flat, easy generalisations about his character and his point of view, such as a biographer is usually obliged partly to qualify, partly to dramatise. But I am more than glad to have Beresford's picture instead—not the composite photograph of a public impression, muddled and fluffy at the edges as composite photographs are, but a single impression of Ford as he appeared to a single friend. Not too much of a friend, either; Beresford can look at Ford from a sufficient distance to see round him. I cannot; Ford is part of me and will remain so, and I can bring myself to use my closer acquaintance with

him only to set down, very objectively, the facts of his unpretentious career.

The young man of twenty-seven whom Beresford encountered on that Diamond Jubilee evening at Shepperton owed something of the distinctive quality with which he always impressed an acquaintance, to an upbringing that by force of circumstances had been in many ways unusual, and could not have failed to give him an outlook and a mould of thought different from those of the average young Englishman. He owed still more to the character and influence of his father. Paul Ford was by choice and temperament a scientist; by profession he was a consulting engineer who specialised in mining work. This calling took him much abroad, and his young wife chose to accompany him upon his longer travels. To judge by Ford's account of his father's description of her, and by a photograph that he has shown me, his mother was a woman of great beauty, little physique, and high spirit. She had broken off an engagement *de convenance* at the eleventh hour to elope with Paul Ford, and had at once gone with him to South America, where he had many months' work to do. By the time they were ready to return to England the birth of their child was imminent, and was eagerly looked forward to as the crowning of their romance; they decided to await the event at Valparaiso. Here William Ford was born at the cost of his mother's life.

Paul Ford had at first to overcome a resentful hatred

for his baby, but he came later to focus upon the growing child all his affections and ambitions. He had been greatly interested, even before the prospect of fatherhood had given the matter personal significance, in the methods of paternal training by which Karl Witte in Germany, and John Stuart Mill and Lord Kelvin in Britain, had become not youthful prodigies so much as youths with an exceptionally fine start in the handicap of life ; and he and his wife had taken especial pains, during the months preceding William's birth, to discover the secret enshrouded in the elder Witte's unsatisfactory writings.[1] It may be that this consistent thinking about education exercised a pre-natal influence upon William Ford, and accounts in some degree for the innate faculty for teaching which he was to possess ; but much also was due to his recollection of his father's methods in teaching him. The child accompanied Paul Ford upon most of his travels, and his young perceptions were exercised over a very exceptional range of childish experience—far too wide a range for the budding intelligence, if his father had not continually enticed him to track down simple generalisations through all the diversity of detail.

I often wish I could have known Ford as a child. I have seen letters that his father wrote to him at

[1] Witte's book is prolix and desultory; a recent edition in English has been cleverly edited and compressed by Mr. Addington Bruce. (*The Education of Karl Witte*: Harrap, 1915.)

school, answering some childish question, or, more often, pointing the way to the boy's own discovery of the answer ; and they give a reflected picture of the young Ford as the most naïvely engaging of young philosophers. Paul Ford had felt bound to try the reluctant experiment of sending him to school. The first attempt failed promptly. A preparatory school of some repute proved to be infected with perversion, and the boy ran away in disgusted alarm, taking refuge (his father was abroad) with a soldier uncle. This worthy was merely scandalised at the indiscipline of such a flight, and received Paul Ford's cabled interdiction of his son's return to the school with the gloomiest misgivings. Ford's chief reminiscence of the weeks that ensued before his father's return concerns the horror of his uncle on discovering his ignorance of the Shorter Catechism—a horror intensified by his frank criticism of this compilation when it was brought to his notice. Paul Ford was later accused by his brother of ' turning a nice kid into a damned young prig ' ; the nice kid had this arraignment *verbatim* from his father as a warning to be more considerate in his conversations with military uncles and their like.

The opinion should be adjoined, for fair contrast, of the retired bishop[1] who prepared Ford for confirmation a year or so later. (Paul Ford always obeyed to the letter, so far as he could conceive them, the

[1] Dr. Ogilvie.

wishes of his dead wife.) The ex-bishop, himself a bit of a naturalist in the roomy, discursive manner often affected by the Victorian cleric, was greatly pleased by the boy's readiness to connect spiritual teaching with natural fact, and was so delighted over a childish analogy between prayer and electrical induction, that he might almost be said to have passed his candidate upon the strength of that alone.

Before this event another school had been given a three terms' trial. Here Ford was untroubled, not unhappy, but—bored. His mind, by now so thoroughly awake, found little to work upon; he lost way, intellectually, and also came back to his father with so many barriers of conventional schoolboy reticence to be patiently removed before their rare comradeship could be reinstated, that Paul Ford eventually decided that schools were, in his case at least, a mistake. 'Mental and physical tanneries' he called them—for, besides obfuscation of mind, his boy had had to endure the usual irrelevant flagellations. The majority of schoolmasters have learnt better since those days in the matter of bodily if not of intellectual mishandling.

It would not be true to say that Ford grew up to young manhood simply and singly the product of his father's training. Paul Ford seems to have been by instinct a believer in self-developed volition rather than imposed habit as the basis of character, and the stages of the boy's adolescence were marked by

steps of progressive liberation from leading-strings. He became more and more self-educating. There was a time when he became conscious that interesting and lucrative work was being refused because the surroundings—a mining camp in Arizona—would not have been edifying for a growing boy ; he felt himself a clog, and made some self-accusing remark to that effect. ' It 's all right, old man,' said his father, ' you 're gradually taking yourself off my hands.' In a sense, too, the boy's increasing emancipation of mind appears to have been due to the father's growing uncertainty in prescribing for him. With an engineer's precision of mind Paul Ford hated to act without a clear plan, and he refused to impose his will or his views arbitrarily unless he could back them up by a clean-cut, rational explanation.

For much the same reason Ford's acquisition of book-learning at this time was oddly casual, almost incidental. The actual teaching that he had from his father was erratic, irregular and discursive, though very much alive. Its unquestionable success in making him not only an eager but a patient and a thorough student of any subject that he took up is hard to explain. Perhaps the example of Paul Ford's masterly thoroughness over his own work had its influence. But it seems also that while he always left the boy to do his own spadework on his own responsibility, he took every care to see him provided first with an efficient spade. Knowing himself to be very rusty in Greek,

he engaged a tutor to give William a thorough grounding—and then, dissatisfied with the result, himself made a rapid study of Greek grammar, applied to it a scientific classification of his own devising, and devoted the period of a sea-voyage to the intensive culture of his son's acquaintance with language-structure in general, as compared with Greek in particular. A year later, at the age of seventeen, Ford could read a Greek play with ease and appreciation.[1]

I can recall no other very definite detail from Ford's description of his father's teaching. The whole process was not so much a formulated system, with distinct points of method that could be classified under so many heads, as the natural, organic outcome of a unique personal relationship. The open, easy comradeship of the two was the basic fact, and with this assured they could afford to take an empiric line in matters of detail. Of Paul Ford's more general influence upon the character and the later tendencies of his son, there are two quite definite things to be said which, I think, partly explain two of Ford's fundamental characteristics as a man.

One of these was his curious view of personal ambition. His father was intensely ambitious for him,

[1] This is an isolated case, but it goes to support the contention of some educators that the boy who begins Greek at twelve gets no further in five years than the point that can be reached in a year by the boy who begins at sixteen.

and they talked much of possible careers. But with his scientific sincerity and his considerable knowledge of the world's ways, Paul Ford could not but emphasise the large if varying degrees of humbug that are necessary for most kinds of professional success ; and he would dwell, as a corollary, upon the mental clouding, muddling, and sophistication that he declared to be necessary (and to be duly effected in schools) to prevent this general atmosphere of humbug from disquieting the intellectual and moral conscience. 'You need a thoroughly muddled conscience to be an honest business man, nowadays,' he would say as he looked through some engineering contract upon which his advice had been asked. Clear vision, he maintained, combined with even a moderate sense of social responsibility, definitely disqualified its possessor for success under the competitive system. (Later, Ford always held that the competitive system in Western civilisation has outlived its usefulness.) It was only natural that the boy should grow up with a high and an accumulating potential of ambition, but with an increasing tendency to mistrust the usual outlets ; and that he should eventually emerge with a philosophy of ambition far removed from that which is conventionally sanctioned—upheld and protected, indeed—by the common instinct for mutual defence among self-seekers in a self-seeking world.

The second of Ford's characteristics that I trace back to a source in the influence of his father's person-

ality is his unusual outlook upon the phenomena of trouble, pain, and grief. Paul Ford's sorrow for the wife whom he had lost never grew less. He hid it with courage and cheerfulness, but in such an intimacy as was theirs, his son could not but be conscious of a deeply underlying sense of tragedy. William Ford as I knew him seemed possessed of some inexplicable solvent for grief, his own or that of others, though he never explained—I do not think he could have explained—what its nature was.

William was to go to Cambridge. His father purposed to keep him till he was twenty, knowing that it was easier for a boy to take his own line in undergraduate life if he were a little older than most 'men' of his year. But when William was nineteen Paul Ford, then in Central Russia with his son, was struck down by plague and died in three days. The boy was stunned. He has described himself as feeling no passion of sorrow, either at the time or during the dreary and solitary trans-continental journey home, but rather as being conscious of a supreme struggle going on within himself against fatalism and hopelessness. Only in dreams, he has told me, he would break down, waking to find his pillow wet with tears. Once he dreamed that he was his father, weeping upon his mother's grave; and the dream for some obscure reason brought him great comfort.

His going to Cambridge was first postponed and finally prevented by financial troubles. The trusted

family solicitor who had the handling of Paul Ford's estate, being himself at a climax of long accumulating difficulties, risked the money in unsafe securities, lost the greater part of it, and barely escaped bankruptcy and prosecution—partly through Ford's eagerness for a compromise that would give the man (with his accounts, for the future, under supervision) another chance. Ford was left with the prospect of forty pounds a year on his majority, and the hope that this amount might increase with the gradual straightening out of the crooked business.

His military uncle, retired by this time and on half pay, was in no position to play Providence; but he bestirred himself to obtain for Ford the offer of a clerkship in the bank where he had for long kept a modest account, and further proposed that his nephew should live with him. This plan put Ford in a difficult position. It was prompted by sentiment, and by the sense of duty of his only surviving relation, rather than by spontaneous inclination; the old Major tried but failed to disguise his fears that the disarrangement of his set ways would amount to an upheaval; and Ford himself was sure that neither he nor his uncle would be happy. On the other hand, the sentimental factor was strong in a boy of nineteen, who was reluctant to meet a generous proposal with a clumsy refusal that must needs give pain; he felt confident of his ability to adapt himself, although against the grain, to his uncle's indurated outlook; and he was feeling very

lonely, and in a mood to welcome the most cross-grained companionship, the least vital link with the life that had been shattered for him, rather than none at all. Also, it was security that was offered to him, a bulwark of a kind against adversity, as compared with the rather desperate adventure of trying to establish his own footing at a moment when sickness of heart somewhat obscured the venturous spirit natural to his temperament and to his time of life.

I have often admired Ford, the grown man whom I knew, at one crisis or another of his life, but I am not sure that my admiration does not go out most heartily to the youth whom I never knew, except in terms of the man's half-humorous, self-quizzical reminiscences in the course of an evening's talk—the youth who decided to take his grief with him out into the world, and to prove in himself alone the value of the equipment with which his dead father had provided him.

He was of course staying with his uncle at the time, and the announcement of his decision led to an interminable discussion that stood for him, in later life, as the prototype of all useless argument. If there was one thing that he always hated it was unreasoning obstinacy, but this he found to be his sole anchor. His uncle asked again and again for an explanation of his reasons, and each time ignored every point of the explanation as it was patiently re-elaborated. He stated and restated his own view without rationale and without variation, ever and again coming back to

the same opening—'But, my dear boy, what reason *can* you have . . . ?' It became a crude contest of wills, and Ford won. It is to the Major's credit that he bore no malice; he remained upon affectionate, if never upon intimate, terms with his nephew until his death.

Ford became an assistant master in a private school at which I was a pupil—this was the germinal beginning of my acquaintance with him. Having no degree, nor even public school credentials, he commanded a salary of £45 a year. Talking to me of this time, in after years, he could not say how far his choice of a profession was the result of an instinct, how far due to lack of alternatives. The instinct must have been present, to judge by the remarkable talent for teaching that he displayed from the very first. He has told me that as a schoolboy he continually found himself criticising and taking mental notes to the tune of 'When I'm a man, I won't teach like that,' and this might suggest the notion that he had even then some unconscious premonition of his future; but since to be a man meant, for the boy Ford, to be a man like his father, it is likely that his boyish mind had only compared his master's teaching unfavourably with his father's, and drew the natural conclusion as to which type of educating grown-up he would prefer to become.

At all events he knew well enough how not to handle a class, and avoided all the usual pitfalls; we youngsters placed him at once as a man who knew his business,

apart from the fact that a lesson with him was as refreshing as a spring in the desert. For his method, and especially for his rare grasp of the art of subject-presentation (an art of whose existence, even, a majority of schoolmasters remain unaware), he must have been largely indebted to his father; he has told me that his first depression at our stifling incapacity for the simplest process of thought, and at the flat, stale tedium that flavoured the school as a whole, was overcome chiefly by a fierce *pietas* that made him burn to prove, if only to himself, the rightness and the communicability of his father's conception of knowledge as a privilege and a joy. His instinct was not long in showing him the way to make us share his vision. When I cast my mind back to the experience of being taught by him, in those early days when his method as a teacher was almost wholly a matter of instinct, it seems to me little wonder that later experience and self-training made him an exceptional exponent of the art of education.

In the first lesson of a term's course he usually gave us little to do but listen, unless one or other of us let his attention wander, when Ford would recall the truant with a beckoning question. Leaning over his desk, his eyes unveiled and looking, it seemed, through the wall behind us into some clear distance, he would map out the line of work upon which we were going to embark. He held out no baits: 'You 'll find that part fairly stiff,' was often his comment after outlining

an attractive section of his programme. When we, in imagination, were already engaged upon the detailed struggles that he had promised us, he would begin to open up vistas. At this point, our subject led into regions of history, at that, into a world of scientific miracles ; its development had been a long, exciting business of human exploration and discovery ; gradually a sense grew upon us of its place and value in the sum total of thought and knowledge.

Then—we felt the moment coming—he would push himself back from his desk and begin a slow, measured walk between the window and the blackboard. There is no possibility of describing from one's childish memory what it was that he said as he walked. He spoke as though to himself, creating no deliberate glamour, searching for simple words in which to clothe his conviction that some trite school subject had its note to sound in the music of the spheres. At its simplest it was, as a whole, hopelessly above our heads ; as method, the later Ford would have condemned it out of hand ; but we listened for all we were worth, piecing together what we could. It seemed for the moment the most desirable thing in heaven or earth to be able, some day, to see arithmetic or geography as Ford saw it. And later in the term, when some ' fairly stiff part ' of the work stood up, stark and inexorable, to be tackled, we went for it with little beguiling or driving. It was all part of the big business—Ford's phrase, to us, for the cosmic scheme—

and if we stuck or shirked at times, a casual-seeming word or two from him would recall the wide vision and the childish impulse towards its realisation.

His actual treatment and illustration of details were always concrete and objective; we learned from him to turn the closest and most unremitting scrutiny upon facts and things; but in the last analysis it was always an abstraction with which he made us fall in love. His wide knowledge fascinated us; but whenever any of us had come hot-foot upon some fresh question, our distinctive desire was to find out what Ford thought about it, rather than what he knew. Theory never came from his hands in heavy lumps, but sprang straight into flight, to be followed eagerly to the limit of our vision. And it was never as his own theory that he insisted upon it. 'Here 's an idea; see it fly!' was his attitude. Many of the people who have been disappointed in him personally, feeling that he never gave fully of his personality, but always withdrew elusively from human contacts, have never seen the meaning of his positive passion for truth. We youngsters realised it, in our childish way. He propped a truth upon his own authority, his own reputation with us, for the first moment only; the next moment he had left it hovering before its flight in the air before us, and had joined us as a spectator.

Perhaps the most distinct picture that he leaves in a schoolboy's memory is of his expression, half anxious,

half whimsical, when he had failed to get an idea to soar at all for our slow-moving little minds. He was like an elder boy trying to fly for us a kite that persisted in diving back to earth. He would stand baffled for seconds, then he would be at us again with one ingenious device after another to make the thing rise. 'Look here; this is a silly instance of what I mean,' he would begin—and proceed to tack on the wildest illustration, often wild to the verge of absurdity. He seldom failed to get his kite up by one expedient or another.

He seemed to have no methods of discipline; the need did not arise. There was no time to rag in his form, and no scope for idleness or stupidity. The latter failing he simply declined to recognise. If you could not understand a thing one way, he would put it to you in another. He seemed to have come to a private intellectual understanding with each of us alike, and we realised dimly that every point had its individual aspect for each one of us. While he was engaged in penetrating some particular density of Smith minor's, the rest of us were engrossed to discover what new light upon the subject would accrue in the process. If he was keen to give us an idea of the unity of all theory, he also made us conscious of the many-sidedness of all fact. Ideas flocked too thickly in his class-room for crime and punishment to find breathing space. It was different when we passed on to the thin droning of another master; then it was

paper pellets that furtively and inevitably thronged the air, and impositions were rife.

The headmaster, knowing that he had a tyro on his hands, would come in at times and listen to Ford's teaching with vague disapproval. On one occasion he broke in upon a lesson in which Ford was inciting us, in a common effort, to express a simple story in French, and stood the class out in a row to demonstrate how French should be taught. Ford waited in polite boredom for the infliction to cease. 'What is the definite article?' asked the headmaster. None of us could tell him. 'They *must* learn the simple elements first,' he threw over his shoulder to Ford, and then to us, 'The definite article is *le—la—les*. Repeat it.' 'LER—LAR—LAY,' we chorussed. 'Genitive, *du —de la—des*. Repeat that.' 'DOO—DLAR—DAY.' 'Dative, *au—à la—aux*. Repeat that.' 'O—ALAR—O.' 'Now repeat all three cases with me.' He led the chorus, and we followed him: 'LER—LAR—LAY; DOO—DLAR—DAY; O—ALAR—O.' 'Very good; now again.' We gave the encore. 'Now by yourselves.' We obliged, each with a sufficient approximation to the nine mysterious and unexplained sounds to pass muster in the crowd. 'There!' He turned to Ford. 'Now they *know* that.' The incident symbolised much for Ford. Incidentally the memory of it gave him a phrase that he often used in talking to me, in later years—'doodarday knowledge.'

He recalled a priceless bit of criticism by this head-

master, when the latter was lecturing him in private upon his shortcomings. 'You must teach them *facts*—teach them *facts*. Teaching as you do it, is only putting ideas into the boys' heads.'

Ford remained in this school for a year, and then resigned the post, feeling that he had reached a point from which, in those surroundings, he could get no further forward. It was characteristic of him that he sought another mastership without having asked for a reference from his late chief, although that gentleman's opinion had been largely modified by Ford's popularity with the boys and the impression, consequent and subsequent, that was made upon the parents. Indeed, I can remember his speaking quite feelingly to my own father of the gap left by Ford's departure, and there can have been no fear that his testimonial would have been other than friendly. Also, almost any testimonial would have been better, commercially, than none. I once heard Ford's view of the matter by accident, when we had been talking about old times at the school. 'What sort of a reference did Marshall give you?' I asked. 'Never asked him for one,' said Ford. 'Why not?' 'Well . . . you see, he would have given me a better one than I could possibly have given him.' The fine shade is typical of a number of Ford's actions and inactions. I sometimes wonder whether, without any deliberate intention, he did not at times inflict a subtle Nemesis upon those who had disappointed him. I seem to recall a certain wistful-

ness in old Marshall's tone when he spoke of Ford afterwards. . . . Did the fact that his testimonial had not been asked for rankle quietly in his mind? I am almost disposed to hope so.

The lack of a reference did not deter Ford from applying for a senior mastership in another school, or prevent his getting it. Apparently his new headmaster liked his letter of application, interviewed him and approved of his ideas on education, and asked no further question. I know little of his life here except that he was happy, very much more free to teach as he chose, and considerably better off. A small boy of eleven or twelve at the time, I wrote him one or two round-hand letters, and lost his answers, of which I can only recall that they were friendly, whimsical, and very refreshing to read in an ink-stained, dusty-smelling classroom.

The habit of travel which Ford had acquired from his life with his father could now be indulged to some extent during school holidays. The holidays during his year at Marshall's had to be spent, for economic reasons, with his military uncle, whom Ford regarded with amused, respectful gratitude, and who regarded Ford with affectionate despair. Ford now spent little time with the old colonel, to their mutual relief, but went instead on inexpensive trips to Bruges and Normandy. But these were scarcely satisfying after his wider-ranging experiences with his father; also they were never, in practice, inexpensive enough, and

had to be atoned for by severe pinching. It happened that I needed coaching, one Easter holidays in my fourteenth year, for a public school scholarship, and the question of a tutor was in the air. I pleaded that Ford might be approached, and successfully. Ford, to whom the invitation happened to be highly opportune financially (a Christmas in Heidelberg had reduced him to two suits, one very shiny), replied that he was quite unqualified for the task, being neither a public school man nor a practised coach, and could offer nothing more convincing than his own opinion that he could teach me anything that was needed. I remember the anxiety with which I watched the letter, in Ford's small, neatly spaced handwriting, undergo its breakfast-table scrutiny. To my joy the verdict was favourable.

Ford came ; and on the same day the appearance of a minor infectious complaint made it advisable that I should go away from home—to be quarantined might mean that I could not go up for examination. It happened that I could not conveniently be sent away with him to any relative or friend. Ford had always a certain quiet, unoffending assurance in dealing with a contretemps of this sort ; it was a small matter, but I do not believe many men would have put forward to strangers the suggestion which he offered—that he and I should go upon a walking tour, with teaching on and by the way. Nor would every man have made the suggestion seem the most natural thing in the

world. At all events we set out, and walked and talked for three weeks in the Lake District. I find it hard to say what it was, exactly, that he taught me during this time. He spoke strictly, while we tramped, or sat in the stuffy sitting-rooms of North country inns, about Latin and Greek grammar, quadratic equations, Angevin kings or French genders; but I think the chief thing that I learned was a certain sense of command over subjects that were in themselves comparatively silly and meaningless—petty concerns, in the handling of which Ford seemed able to communicate to me a kind of authoritativeness. I know that when the ordeal came I went through it without a tremor, and found myself writing my papers like a tradesman parcelling up goods from a well-arranged stock; and the arrangement had been Ford's doing. I won that scholarship in virtue of an attitude of mind. Ford's principle as an examination coach, I afterwards learned, was a cynical one; he held that examinations are of little use as tests of general ability—that they test, in fact, nothing much but the ability to pass examinations, an isolated faculty of no very high value or significance. He did not coach by giving dodges or tips, but by getting the available contents of a pupil's mind into a particular artificial order and arrangement, suitable not for genuine thought, but for the easy handling and sorting out of the pellets of fact for which examiners chiefly make requisition. A wholesome contempt for the entire business was,

perhaps, not the least valuable part of the equipment that he supplied.

This, Ford's first experiment in coaching, chanced to be something of a turning-point in his manner of life, quite apart from teaching. Our walking tour gave him the idea that it is worth while to travel at home as well as abroad ; and it was not long before he had set himself to the discovery of England. He loved places as places, but his insatiable passion, which became an important influence in his later life, was for understanding the minds of different types of men. He studied men as though he were giving himself the training that a statesman ought to undergo. He came to know the common Englishman, the worker, in most of his typical varieties, so well that he could not talk about the working classes for five minutes to any ordinary member of the upper or professional class without convincing him that he, Ford, was talking nonsense, in plain contradiction of the facts that a man can read in his newspaper any day of the week. It was not that he suggested any social theory which ran against his interlocutor's politics ; in the ordinary modern sense of the word ' politics ' Ford had none ; but his knowledge bridged a gap which few genteel people can even imagine as bridged without real mental discomfort. Consequently he seldom let himself be drawn into talk with the well-to-do about ' the masses.' His understanding of them remained a personal hobby that he could share with few.

CHAPTER V

Two explanations are due to the reader before I write of the next period in Ford's life. The first concerns my source of information with regard to a peculiarly intimate phase of his experience. I have given myself the task of setting down, as simply as possible, everything without exception that seems really typical of Ford as I knew him. I do not think that an honest biography can be written otherwise. But in reading a biography I have often been conscious of a scruple, when the book came within touch of the ultimate penetralia of the subject—a sense that the biographer must have overstepped some boundary, not of reticence so much as of confidence, in saying or hinting so much; and with this sense there comes a reluctance to read further without some explicit or implicit assurance that one's peering is, as it were, authorised, and that one is not an accessory after the fact, conniving for curiosity's sake in the writer's immodest tweaking aside of curtains.

The difficulty is obvious when one becomes the writer; it would be a clumsy interruption to the flow of the story to be always giving chapter and verse in proof of loyalty to a friend's confidence; but the

fact remains of the reader's potential discomfort when the subject of a biography seems to be laid out upon the dissecting-table. To avoid a series of self-defensive paragraphs throughout this chapter, I propose to state, once and for all, my reasons for believing that Ford would have passed an even closer description of his experience as a lover than I can base upon the things that he told me.

As we talked, and as he dropped out, one by one, detail after detail of his own story, he continually recurred to a fundamental desire that others might only know, through clear statement, what he himself had learned with such slow difficulty through an ignorant process of trial and error. 'I wish I were a novelist,' he would say, and would go on to speak of the manner in which he would construct a novel upon the basis of his past experience—a novel that should be a plea for frankness, for straight dealing in that market of the emotions to which a man and a woman reciprocally commit themselves, on approval, when once they have tacitly admitted that love may be the outcome of nearer acquaintance.

Also, he had no pleasure in reticence for its own sake, often maintaining that human relationships would develop along very much happier lines if only we could all be persuaded to keep no cards up our sleeves.

My second difficulty, it will be guessed, is in writing about the object of Ford's predilection. It does not matter that recognition, among a certain smallish

circle of friends and acquaintances, is inevitable, for there is no reason why it should be in any degree discomforting unless to the mind that makes reticence a fetish. (And this type of mind, I must confess, I think it a plain duty as well as a delight to shock.) Outside this circle, my alteration of the name will sufficiently cover the tracks.

It was through his contact with working men that Ford first became really conscious of woman as a natural force. Hitherto he had taken women for granted, and indeed had seen but little of them. Having grown up motherless and sisterless, without even an aunt to stand for femininity among his youthful conceptions, it was perhaps natural that he should have almost ignored the phenomenon for so long. If he had been made of more quickly inflammable material in the amatory sense, he might well have stumbled into initiation, in his ignorance, upon the lowest of planes ; he always declared that here fortune must have been on his side. It was curious that his first confused inkling of vital aspects with regard to one half of humanity should have come through his interest in the cruder strata of the other half—through the blunt talk of men in a wharfside inn or a booth at an agricultural fair.

He described such talk as affecting him, whether it was characterised by a beery jocularity or by a rough semi-articulate earnestness, with an odd sense of paradox. Woman was, alternatively, a hoarse joke,

a terror, a prop and stay, a whirlwind of words, a Silence. Within it all, the strong synthetic faculty in Ford's mind seemed to discern, subconsciously at first, a picture of a woman's world, seen darkly in the very smoky glass from which the men transmitted these contradictory reflections. His general impression was that women stood for something that he had not yet begun to realise, something vaguely fundamental that was treated by crude masculinity with a kind of ribald respect. There must be, he began to infer, a whole hemisphere, hidden from him hitherto like the other side of the moon, of women's interests, women's share in the upholding of society—woman's outlook. Upper middle-class life, so far as he had seen it in being and as a whole, had successfully concealed from him that any such complex could co-exist with the world of masculine thought and organisation. He had thought of woman, before, as a remote and a comfortably undefined variant of man: an adjunct, biologically necessary, and economically valuable in the maintenance of domestic functions, to be classed as such without further intellectual bother. He now began to envisage the feminine hemisphere as a dimly lit but an essential reality; and thence he gradually came to the realisation that the masculine and the feminine outlook had no dividing boundary but were coterminous, different indeed but not separate—intricately, indissolubly interrelated.

Thus his interest in man, abstract and then con-

crete, led him inevitably to an interest in woman; abstract at first, and then . . . concrete. In a sense it is true that he brought to first love the spirit of a detached inquirer; but not in the sense in which detachment means bloodlessness, or morbid introspection, or over-analysis. He had the true instinct to empty himself of experience in order to know experience; he emerged into the sun-bathed world of first love as a chicken comes out of its shell. But his intellect was very much part of the chicken.

Mary Worthington (as I shall call her) was a girl to whom slumming was a new hobby in a world that consisted very largely of the raw material for new hobbies. Tall, slight, fair, and expensive-looking, she came as Lady Bountiful to a home in Bermondsey where Ford, pipe in mouth, was lending the woman of the house a hand with the mangle, and discussing with her the husband's chance of finding the job that he had gone out to look for. The husband was a friend whom he had picked up the day before, a ne'er-do-weel who, having broken his wife's arm in the course of the drunken fit that had brought about his most recent dismissal, would on this day have been contritely helping with the week's washing if Ford had not hounded him out in quest of work and taken his place at the wheel. Ford was explained to Mary Worthington as 'a young friend of me 'usband's,' and had to explain himself further, on interrogation, as

being not out of work too, but on a holiday. His tone and manner must have belied the appearance and costume that he affected for these occasions, for it followed, the mangling being finished, that Miss Worthington quite welcomed Ford's tentative readiness to accompany her down the street.

They began, naturally, to talk of working-class problems, and Mary, a novice in such matters, questioned and listened eagerly as Ford produced his views. Always keen to talk down to the roots of a subject in the company of any one with whom he felt sympathetic, he must have been at his best in this conversation. Mary, chiefly impressed at first by his lucidity of statement, quickly caught the glow of his enthusiasm, and gave light for light by enveloping him in that softly luminous atmosphere of appreciation in which thought unfolds and blossoms into language unafraid. He was an engaging mystery to her—some young socialist poet, she thought him, an extreme product of that working-class education of which she had vaguely heard at home. She had not got past the suggestion of the artisan about his clothes, and the suggestion gave the secure sense of a gulf across which romantic interest could play quite uncommitted. Ford, engrossed in his thesis, was more or less conscious of a new vibration, a subtly electrical thrill. He was of the type that enters into personal relations through fundamentals rather than by way of small surface steps towards intimacy; and there was something

novel in the quality of his listener's attention, a certain delicate allurement that beckoned on his words, an unspoken assurance that nothing need lie too near his heart for speech.

A crucial moment came when they discovered that they had walked nearly to Knightsbridge, and that the Worthingtons' house was close at hand. There was a pause at a corner, a pretext of a few final questions, a spinning out of the replies, while each was consolidating the rapidly formed decision that this must not be the end. . . .

They agreed, both of them half shamefacedly, upon an hour the following day when both would be likely to revisit the lady of the mangle. It was important, as they very rightly reassured one another, to know as soon as possible whether the husband had or had not managed to find work—and, if he had not, to collaborate at once in putting to the test their value as whole-hearted votaries of the poor and the dishonoured.

The man had not found work; he was a specimen too deeply sunken to find anything, unless by chance, without the aid of others, his superiors either in virtue of vitality or of social handicap in the race of life. His case, and that of his wife and children, made a very pretty problem for Ford and Mary Worthington to solve, and on the whole they solved it cleanly. But its solution was a long business—any one who has touched social problems in the concrete, even with the

most amateurish hand, will know how long—and in the process they raised a very different problem for themselves, an enigma that was to prove too hard for final solution of any kind.

Ford had fallen in love, of course, with Mary Worthington, if we are to consider it crudely; but the phrase 'to fall in love' admits of many varying interpretations, and I think, if I am to state my own view of his condition with a bluntness equal to that of the conventional admission, that there was a sense in which he was never in love with her at all, nor she with him. He suffered agonies; but they were not agonies of desire, and they led to no crucial determination. On the other hand, he undoubtedly found Mary indispensable, as she found him, for the sake of some unique current that could flow only through their association. Ford, his status now confessed—no romantic, self-educated artisan, but, even worse, perhaps, to the moneyed mind, a mere upper-middle-class struggler—became an occasional, a very occasional caller who disguised the shabbiness of his best suit in the darker corners of the pretentious Worthington drawing-room. The two met far oftener—the Worthingtons would have been deeply scandalised if they had known—as coadjutors in promoting the welfare of the down-trodden. (No doubt they met for the sake of meeting; but it should be recorded that several other 'cases' are still voluble in their appreciation of the sympathy so uncommonly practical,

so effectively helpful, that gave them a fresh and an actually progressive start in life.)

Mary Worthington had played with flirtation in her time, and had become bored with it. She had never encountered a deep personal emotion before, and she played with it, in herself, as a cat plays with a mouse —or as a mouse might surrender itself to a game of hide-and-seek with a cat. With Ford's emotions as distinct from her own she did not play, but rather commiserated them and him. At this time they quite wished that they could marry, but the thing was clearly preposterous. Sir Joshua Worthington had tens of thousands a year, and no intention of sharing them in any proportion with needy aspirants to his daughter's hand. Ford had, by now, £200 or £250. Mary had expensive tastes . . . and none was to prove more expensive, as a matter of spiritual economics, than her taste for Ford. She could neither accept him wholly nor give him up. They hung fire interminably.

If Ford had been able to play the impetuous suitor whole-heartedly, things might have been different. But he held a curious theory—his belief in it was life-long, and I have an idea, though he never told me so, that it originated with Paul Ford—that no such thing as a one-sided love could exist, and that the ultimate test for the reality and permanence of a passion lies in the perfection of its mutuality. An endless number of unhappy marriages, he would maintain, come of engagements that either the man or the woman has

forced on, relying on a single, individual flood-tide of the emotions to float a vessel, in which two must live, over all the shallows of life. It was not that one loved more and the other less, and that the less was bound to stultify the more; the often-accepted doctrine would then be equally tenable that the less-loving could 'learn to love' the more-loving—that the greater passion would raise the lesser to its own level. By Ford's theory there was no greater passion, but only a passion that was temporarily more vehement; greater in momentary pressure, but less in ultimate volume. Ford was always, if he was anything, an advocate of the liberation rather than the repression of natural impulse, but when sex came into question he carried this principle into a further region than that of the plain issue between self-expression and self-restriction. 'The sex-motif,' he once wrote to me, 'was essential to the orchestration of life millions of years, probably, before man appeared upon the earth. It is so fundamental that we, who in a sophisticated civilisation have lost control of fundamentals, have yet to take jolly good care that it doesn't run away with us unawares. We mustn't shove it under—things that are shoved under go rotten, and fester below the surface—but we have got to see that when it comes up it shan't come up with a rush that sweeps us (and others besides us) off our civilised feet.'

There can be no doubt that Ford deliberately refused to force the pace with Mary Worthington. His own

desire was strong at times—and there was also the convention by which only the man may give even the slightest explicit intimation that desire exists. But he refrained, not only because he knew that her emotion was slighter or more inhibited than his own, but also because he was assured that no passionate impulse of his own was justified or justifiable unless it evoked, spontaneously, without any letting loose of floodgates on his part, an equal preliminary response on hers.

Desire, besides, was not for either of them the beginning and the end of the matter. They desiderated a complete union of mind and outlook—not a sameness but a correlation, a perfection of give-and-take. And there were subjects on which give-and-take was distressingly imperfect.

In this respect they had met, at first, under very favourable auspices. Mary had been brought up in a family atmosphere of gold-cased Toryism, and had encountered Ford over a question of the practical application of social theory—a troublesome region of thought from which the gold-casing had efficiently shielded her hitherto. As regards Bermondsey her mind had been virgin ground; she had not learned the comfortable Calvinism that is convinced of the pre-ordained under-doggishness of the under-dog, or she would not have gone a-slumming in so ingenuous a hope of ameliorating its lot. Consequently Ford's theory, combined with the visible and unqualified success of Ford's practice, had appealed to her as

common sense idealism of quite unquestionable excellence, and she became the convert-at-sight of a social doctrine at which gilded Tories, Manchester Liberals, and Marxian Socialists would have turned up their noses with a rare unanimity. Ford's later dictum, 'a man is worth what he wills,' was the real root of the lesson that Mary so readily learned from him; and no system of government or of social organisation has yet been put forward that adequately answers the demands of such a principle. But Mary took the notion in her stride, quite naturally, on account of its obvious rightness, oblivious of the fact that it upset the foundations of her upbringing.

None the less, those foundations were upset; and when other points arose, upon which Ford's convictions and her carefully ingrained prejudices were at variance, she had a feeling that he had almost stolen a march upon her by establishing in her mind his own sense that human values were absolute, not relative. They disagreed lamentably about the rights and wrongs of the Boer War, and she felt, throughout the controversy upon which that minor tragedy led them reluctantly to engage, that he had rather unfairly made out his case for the Boers in advance, when he had made it plain to her too willing comprehension that the British worker was both misunderstood and exploited, and then reviled and oppressed if he ever resented the misunderstanding or rebelled against the exploitation. Her case against the Boers rested upon no such

theoretic grounds. They were rebels and traitors—Sir Joshua, her father, had carried repetition on this point to the level of hypnotic conviction. They were Enemies of Our Empire. They were dirty brutes who didn't wash. (Ford unwisely ventured the witticism that their real opponents were mining prospectuses that wouldn't wash either—one says such things in moments of heat.) The natural result of such a discussion was mere deadlock. Their mutuality, on this question, became a mutuality of pained surprise, with the phrase, 'Oh, why *can't* you understand . . . ?' as its dominant motive. (No one, of course, was dreaming, then, of an ultimate reconciliation between Boer and Briton.)

The Boer War was typical of their subjects of disagreement. Like most people, Mary was ready to rejoice in the sweeping tide of patriotic enthusiasm that surged over England at the time, and instinctively hostile to the appearance of any critical breakwater. When Ford spoke, in terms that suggested the diagnosis of a disease, of the muddy waves of slum wastrels that rolled rioting over London when news came of some barely averted fiasco at the front, she was saddened and bewildered. It seemed to her literally disgraceful, it seemed to manifest some fatal kink in Ford's character that he could fail to be at one with the general sentiment. There were occasions, she felt—and there are many people who feel as she did—when no one has a right to hold an individual opinion.

There were also generic subjects to which personal, distinctive views seemed to her to be misapplied. The foremost of these, as may easily be guessed, was religion. Ford was beginning at this time an attempt to achieve clarity of mind as regards the meaning and the usefulness of church doctrine. Characteristically, he saw the conflict between a spiritual and a material interpretation of life as a mere waste of time; he wanted to arrive at a unity—to see how the material expresses the spiritual, and how the spiritual justifies the material. Mary had learned to keep the two aspects in watertight compartments, and by acquired instinct she was uneasily mistrustful of any tampering with the partition. Her church-loyalty demanded that the spiritual should disclaim all need of support from the material, should regard any association, indeed, in the light of a contamination; he, hot upon the track of his thesis, would fail to notice her distress as he maintained not only that materialism was contaminating only in so far as it became divorced from its correlative and corrective, the spiritual outlook (on this point alone they might have found a basis of agreement), but also, and the more insistently for her opposition, that the spiritual outlook could have neither vitality nor breadth till it had condescended to tussle with the grossest and grimiest facts of man's material existence. In Ford's view, no comfort of the soul was worth more than the cushioned comfort of a sofa until the nearest slum had been accounted for; just as no explanation

of bodily things was worth looking at that did not take into account their symbolic, even their sacramental, aspect as crude and imperfect manifestations of something spiritual.

From religion, and from sacramentalism—the main stumbling-block of all religious discussion—they fell very naturally into an interminable argument about marriage. It is difficult to realise how this couple, in many respects so ill-assorted, found it so easy, as to them it appears to have been, to talk freely and openly about marriage and about the awkward problems of sex that any frank discussion of marriage inevitably drags into court. I can only explain that Ford was, upon this subject, a rather exceptional being. He could talk to boys about sex in a way that made the whole business seem as simple and straightforward as walking across a road; and I can imagine that he could have talked about sex to a girl in much the same irresistibly ingenuous tone. And there is also the fact that on this point he and Mary met in a common ingenuousness—she had been shielded from sex as from slumdom, and brought to the one as fresh and natural a mind as to the other. At all events they contrived to agree about sex—very much in the abstract, of course—far more distinctly than the really nice-minded would think allowable, while maintaining an unalterable antagonism upon the question of marriage.

(It must be explained that the mere word 'marriage'

had no terrors for them personally. The possibility of their getting married was by this time quite a commonplace between them, and if once their various disagreements had been completely and satisfactorily resolved, they would have sought out their officiating parson and would have had the knot tied without even a momentary qualm.)

Naturally, it was their puzzled contemplation of the married lives of the poor that first set them talking about marriage in general. The attitude of their Bermondsey friend, the lady of the mangle, towards her dreadful husband—an attitude of disillusion indeed, but stoic rather than cynical—became a nucleus for one part of their discussion. There must be something about marriage, they decided—about the definite burning of boats that it involved, all the more definite for the poor, who have no subconscious thought of divorce as a possible way of retreat in the last extremity —something of extraordinary efficacy in leading people to make the best of one another, cutting underneath the irritations and petulancies that so often bring a friendship or an unfettered union to an end. Their disagreement was about the nature of this something Mary was sure that it was the element of compulsion that settled the matter. Any two people, she would say, can keep together up to a certain point; beyond this point, whether they reach it sooner or later, their interests, their ways or their views of life, have to clash. Here the sheer imperative of the marriage

contract says its say ; and the impetus of its absolute declaration, ' You must go on with it,' tides the disputants over these inevitable shoals into the quieter and deeper waters of mutual acceptance and toleration. The word toleration was to Ford, in such a connection, like a red rag to a bull. He would have none of it. Tolerance was a fine thing between enemies, an admirable half-way house for those who, tempted to hatred, preferred the magnanimous alternative of giving credit for sincerity to opponents with whom they confessed to a misunderstanding. But it was not the attitude for people who loved, or professed to love. Marriage, for these, was not to be a compelling tie for the reluctant, but a splendid declaration of mutual liberty for the willing—a mutual declaration of independence in interdependence that should commit a man and a woman, not to acquiescence in an outside authority that strapped them, as it were, together, but to their realised and expressed confidence in an inner authority, common to them both, that could be relied upon to dissolve their inevitable differences of idea into a common unity of purpose.

Ford in fact believed, as Mary complained, that marriage, the ceremony and the contract, ' didn't really do anything ' in the sense of forcibly fixing a spiritual relationship in a state of permanence, or of supplying a compelling spiritual motive from without for the tiding-over of a period of stress. He held that its influence from without was solely on the side of

respectability and correctitude—powerful, useful, but not spiritual forces. Its spiritual significance lay wholly in the degree to which it was the symbol and the expression of an inner feeling, a nucleus of expressed purpose upon which thought could focus and around which all the vague sentiments, emotions, and aspirations that come and pass in a more fleeting relationship might cluster and co-ordinate.

This notion of a mental nucleus had a great deal to do with Ford's view of sex and of physical passion. ' It is fatal,' he wrote to me on another occasion, ' to let one's thought dwell upon these physical urgencies ; the more you are an educated, civilised creature, the more fatal it is—a developed imagination brings up such terrific reinforcements ! And it is just as fatal to determine, in a merely negative spirit, not to think about them : blank inhibition (if—*if* it succeeds) only drives the thing underground. The equally difficult effort of will implied in " thinking about something else " is at least harmless (again, *if* it succeeds) ; but it merely shelves the difficulty from one time to the next, and I am not sure that it doesn't end by overcrowding the shelf to toppling-point. My own remedy is, as usual, co-ordination. Never let yourself look at the business as if it were an isolated phenomenon. Think about " something else "—think about everything else—but think about other things as they are affected by the sex difficulty. That 's the way to get that confounded Voice of Nature into a proper frame

of mind about its relative importance and unimportance. Make it realise that it was always meant to be the servant, never the autocrat of Life. . . .'

And I have gathered that Ford talked to Mary Worthington, not in so frank a strain but to the same more generalised effect, about that perpetual bother of sex which so afflicts the unacknowledged underlives of civilised people. Their discussion of marriage, first from the spiritual, then from the social, point of view, had to come down—such was their mutual sincerity—to the material bedrock of physical fact. But Ford, while insisting through all delicacy of treatment upon the sheer realities, kept clear his main principle of co-ordination. And, in the interests of co-ordination, and of his principle that sex must somehow be brought into proportion with the other demands of Nature and of civilisation, he was strong in his insistence that the mental nucleus provided by the human convention of marriage was incalculably effective in making passion a relative, not an absolute factor in the life of man. The marriage-ideal makes it an essential that people should take other things equally into account. It brings everything in—necessary adaptabilities in matters of temper—the financial element—questions of habit and idiosyncrasy—all these matters, each with its place and purpose, come in to qualify the single, sheer animal obsession which sex can only too easily become if it is regarded for itself alone. I remember that Ford said once, in conversation, 'Sex

has become top-heavy in civilised life. Marriage is the only efficient ballast that has been discovered so far.'

Their own friendship, for all the fundamental disagreements by which it was fretted, certainly had much the quality of a well-nucleated marriage of minds. Their quite extraordinary freedoms of discussion—freedoms, too, whose setting was the vibrant atmosphere of their strong mutual attraction—can have been possible only in virtue of that ' co-ordination ' of which Ford spoke. It became, I know, so settled a habit of thought between them that they could talk of one thing in terms of another, without any uttered arrangement or definition of symbols, not vaguely but with the simplest lucidity and directness. And it was in a glow of happiness that they came together in such talk, rejoicing in the electrical leap of feeling and understanding that thrilled every interchange. Their happiness, indeed, must have been singularly perfect and poetic at times. But there was another side to the picture. Besides their frank joy in ranging the wide expanse of thought and feeling that was theirs in common, there was the ever-recurrent moment of inevitable trespass into the region of their ineluctable differences. And the differences, too, had their co-ordination, their sensitive nucleus—but sensitive for pain, not for joy. The keen edge of mutual insight had to cut both ways. The friendship was bi-nuclear, and one of the nuclei—hurt. Nothing could be

laughed away as a trivial disagreement, not worth troubling about; at the dropping of a pebble the whole flock of their differences rose, darkening the sun.

In attempting to give the true story of Ford's experience, with the hope of eliciting some hint of its influence upon his life and his outlook, I ought not to shirk the analysis of certain periods of black agony through which he passed. I feel that their recognition is vital to the full understanding of the man. But my pen hesitates as though it were a scalpel held in an inexpert hand above sentient flesh. No one can know the degree of suffering that underlay that difficult venture along an untrodden path. The heights of spiritual intimacy, of luminous delight beyond words, had a splendour of which Ford's broken gleams of reminiscence have given me an ever-memorable glimpse; but he hid the depths of frustration, the abyss of love eager and denied, the tragedy of those who can lose their hearts but cannot lose their heads. Here I must respect his so unusual secretiveness. The tragedy can be expressed very fully and completely in fewer words than it would take to outline, in detail, its lowest tidemark. Ford and Mary Worthington lost love because they had indulged in the dream of a relation beyond the compass of present humanity—something too near the love of angels to be approached without a lamentable singeing of mortal wings. But Ford was not to know this for the truth until several long years had passed.

My clearest mental picture of the pair at this time has for background a country lane that winds through cropped hazel-groves gleaming freshly with the sweet, virginal colouring of spring flowers—a scene that Ford revisited with me many years later, 'scanning its beauties with an absent gaze' that told of a vivid train of reawakened memories. He gave me his memories, in an odd, dreamy way, as though he were remembering aloud, that evening as we smoked and watched the fading afterglow of sunset after supper at a village inn. It was on this occasion that he spoke most feelingly of his desire that it were possible, somehow, so to set out the story of his bygone experience that a few others might know and understand. A sense of beauties past and foregone—inevitably foregone, because they had been of their nature uncapturable—had hold of him that evening; and he longed that one or two besides himself might realise not the beauty alone, the perilous beauty of such a first love as his, but also the infinite trouble, the unmanageable complex of mere mortal incertitude and worry that comes of a love-ideal left too much in the air, a love-story in which hero and heroine alike are at the mercy of the clouds and winds that are appointed to make sport of those who choose to abandon their footing upon solid earth.[1]

It was a romantically-minded elder married sister

[1] This reference of Ford's, which I have endeavoured to paraphrase, was to Goethe's poem *Grenzen der Menschheit*.

of Mary's, aided and abetted by a husband with literary interests and unconventional views of propriety (I can touch upon their unashamed complicity, now that Sir Joshua Worthington has gone whither this book cannot follow him, without bringing opprobrium upon their heads—and they must forgive me this summary specification of their amiable selves), who provided opportunity for the long walks and discussions in a countryside lit by spring. Mary came down from London and stayed with them, and Ford had rooms near by, and thence the two carried out what might be described as a series of small celibate elopements, walking expeditions of a day, two days, three or four days. The sister, trusting Ford's unmistakable balance and Mary's 'niceness,' or perhaps with an instinctive judgment for the fact that they were too much set upon a fastidious perfection to snatch at the improvident moment, feared no sudden sensuous culmination, though she longed sympathetically for the psychological culmination that should decide them deliberately to marry in despite of obstacles. Her husband encouraged her rather to welcome than to dread the slight risk of a compromising scandal; he was frankly impatient for developments, and told Ford in the course of a semi-avuncular talk that any occurrence capable of shaking them up and inducing them to get a move on would meet with his highest approval. He only put into direct and matter-of-fact language the first elements of an idea

that was by now very strongly present in their own minds.

They were distressed, and perhaps a little wearied in spirit over the failure hitherto of their long-continued effort to come to terms; and they rejoiced at the developing prospect that now unfolded itself before them of a freedom, an elbow-room in time hitherto unattainable, which might give them a real chance of explaining themselves to one another, of achieving at last the long-desiderated fusion of their poignant difficulties. Long days in the clear, crystalline open air of spring; long, open talks, and long, open silences under the deepening sky that seemed to enlarge its vault illimitably for the reception of cosmic confidences; long twilights, when they would meet to watch the brightening of stars until the hour arrived for them to part again and return for the night to their discreetly separate lodgings; it all seemed to promise an opportunity, a liberation that might lead to anything and everything. The opportunity was in truth magnificent; but they miscalculated the force that had held and was bound to hold them apart. Nature, even in spring, could not heal the cleft between two minds that thought oppositely about the purposes of life.

None the less they strove unknowing for a complete reconciliation. The tide of spring's impulse was strong in them, and ever and again they would struggle, as they tramped and talked, for the consummation of thought and feeling that should make

everything clear in a strife so keen as to be literally exhausting. But each time their castle, half built in the air, would collapse; their mental individualities would fall back from one another, retracted, resentful, hostile, while their talk took refuge in an atmosphere of half-humorous mutual condolence.

Their problem changed its footing with the admission of failure that worked its way at last into the place of command. Before, the question had been whether they could not go the whole way together, from a unique friendship to as unique a passion; now they had their answer, for the time at least, and were faced by a new uncertainty. There they were; their relation was none the less in being for its failure of becoming; and its being, its apparent state of permanent suspension, refused to be translated into a matter for quiet acceptance. It was a perpetual ache. They decided to part for a time, to 'break off the non-engagement,' as Ford put it, and go their separate ways in search, perhaps of enlightenment, at any rate of the peace of mind that they could never achieve together.

My real intimacy with Ford began shortly after this decision had been ratified. I had just left school, and was to travel for six months before going to Oxford; Ford had already determined to leave Buckley's, and willingly accepted the post of my *cicerone*, offered at so opportune a moment.

I knew nothing of Mary Worthington at this time, nor did I know, what I was later to learn, that Ford,

at thirty-two, had come to a point in life at which he was heavily assailed by a sense of failure and of personal meaninglessness. He had done nothing, he felt, achieved nothing; his personality was *in vacuo*. He had moods of horrible depression when he saw himself as a hollow and purposeless thing in a world of mocking unrealities. Yet at this very time he stood to me for all that was strong and hopeful and vital in thought. If I could have read his inner questionings then, I should have been as much amazed as though I had seen him turn into some one else before my eyes. It must have been that as he fought out his own battle against pessimism, he imparted to me the gains of every local success and, for the main issue, radiated the courage that was determined to fight its way out of darkness, not the tense anxiety and disquiet which made that courage necessary.

CHAPTER VI

Our plan was to go to Teneriffe for January and February of 1903, perhaps visiting one or two other of the Canaries in the course of our stay; then to get some kind of a boat to take us to Cape Juby on the West African mainland, and to work our way in leisurely style around and eastwards along North Africa; and then, crossing the Mediterranean to Sicily, to travel northwards through Italy as gradually as the rise of the season's temperature might allow, finally crossing the Maloja Pass into the Engadine, to try our hands at climbing (it is his hands that the novice uses), and to enjoy that climax of the Alpine flowers that comes just before midsummer. It was a pretty scheme, but circumstance and our own choice were to find us an even better one.

We spent a fortnight in Teneriffe, of which the first ten days devoted themselves, belatedly, we were told, to showing us what sub-tropical rain can do. When we were not sleeping, eating, or going for walks of conscience under a steady vertical pelt that was like an English thunder-shower of the heaviest, not only doubled in volume but indefinitely prolonged, we sat in a cool verandah bordering the open *pátio* of our hotel

and read and talked discursively. I think, looking back upon those days, that we both were quietly revelling in a sense of release and relaxation. For me, the change from the exigencies of school was celestial. I read FitzGerald's *Omar Khayyám* for the first time, and Ford grinned with appreciative sympathy over my raptures. The very rain, a nuisance from the sight-seeing tourist's point of view, seemed to me a blessed dispensation that gave elbow-room to long-starved thoughts and emotions. Also, it stood to me for the washing away of many useless accretions, knobby and semi-vitrified, that I had brought out with me as part of the inevitable impedimenta of the public schoolboy. I was to learn later on that Ford was as glad of that perpetual downpour as I was, and also for his own personal reason. It seemed to him to dissolve the haunting trouble that so persistently besieged his mind, the trouble of his broken relations with Mary Worthington, and to symbolise in the rushing cascades and the ever-rising torrents to which it gave birth the sweeping away of the inevitable sorrow of frustrated love, the washing clean of a new world that awaited the interpretation of an observer newly cleansed in spirit.

Teneriffe was indeed, when the rain stopped, a new world. We crossed the island on foot, and rejoiced over the world-famous view from Humboldt's Corner; and we climbed the Peak from Villa Orotava, where (to mingle small things with great) Ford had a re-

calcitrant tooth stopped by a Spanish dentist, and returned wishing the dentist had been left-handed, since his left hand had smelt of garlic alone, while his right hand, which he chiefly employed, smelt not only of garlic but of bad cigars as well. The Peak of Teneriffe has the habit of spreading out an umbrella of cloud, during a few hours from midday onwards, along the plane of a ridge that encircles, craterwise, its topmost cone; and as we ate our sandwiches upon the summit—itself a smallish crater, of which we had perched ourselves upon the highest tooth in its serration—the dazzling cloud-canopy grew and solidified in whiteness some three thousand feet below us, until we might have been sitting islanded upon that brownish-black sugarloaf of lava rock, surrounded by a sea of which the cloud-stratum merged almost imperceptibly, at its tenuous edges, into the actual ocean ten thousand feet below it. 'Well,' said Ford, 'here we are out of the world at last!' and his words had a ring that I can interpret now as the expression of his first sense of full escape since 'the world' had laid hold upon him. Then, I only registered his remark (such was my egoism) as a sympathetic recognition of my own sense of a new and a magnificently picturesque freedom from scholastic ties.

We were not to stay long in Teneriffe. The day after our return from Orotava to Santa Cruz, Ford came into conflict with a Spaniard whom he found beating a small girl in a by-street. There was a tussle,

and the man drew a knife, which Ford at length succeeded in wrenching from him and throwing away; this accomplished, he let his sufficiently bruised and dejected adversary go. I think that this contemptuous clemency, even more than a rankling sense of defeat, roused the revenge-obsession that proved to have taken hold upon the bully, who made such a nuisance of himself in the character of a lurking peril, that we decided to go elsewhere rather than be bothered either with the incessant watchfulness that became the price of Ford's continued existence unstabbed (there were two rather comically abortive attempts) or with the unknown complications and delays of the Santa Cruz equivalent for police-court procedure that would have been necessary to bring the offender to book. Also, Ford was far from defending his intervention in the first instance, claiming that he had interfered solely through the workings of an obscure British instinct on behalf of a child who quite possibly, according to Santa Cruz standards, had dared and merited her punishment by some too effective chain of Canary-Spanish insults. 'I dare say he 's just as right in wanting to knife me as I was in punching his jaw,' said Ford as he summed up the case; and in leaving Santa Cruz he left any final judgment of the main issue not to go by default, but to resolve itself in terms of relative values.

We had intended in any case to see some of the less-visited islands of the group, and after a visit to Fuerte-

ventura and Lanzarote, interesting to us scientifically but unproductive of biographical incident, we found ourselves at Palma,[1] and in an environment that was literally to open up a new chapter of existence for Ford. It is my business to suppress detail that would be appropriate only in a book of travels, and I am trying to look back upon the peacefully crowded months of our subjection to the spell of this fortunate island with a view to selecting the pictures and the incidents that best typify the side of Ford and of Ford's later outlook which was then in the making; and, as a rule for my general guidance, I am relying upon the plan of giving chief place to the things that Ford in his later maturity chiefly remembered in conversation, or referred to in the midst of a discussion for illustration of the argument that he wished to put forward.

By this criterion our first view of the possibilities of Palma, both scenic and, as it afterwards proved, sociological, certainly calls for an attempt at description. We had climbed on mule-back, for endless hours it seemed, to the crest of the pass that provides difficult communication—a mere foot-track—between the side of the island that faces East and trades through Teneriffe with Europe, and the side that faces West and trades largely with Cuba. We did not then know that the west-looking side was in this sense nearer to lands

[1] Not to be confused with Las Palmas, an island as tourist-ridden as Teneriffe; still less, of course, with the town that is the capital of Majorca.

distant by the breadth of the Atlantic than to the Palma of the eastern slopes, and it was with an impulse of æsthetic rather than geographical exaggeration that Ford exclaimed as we topped the ridge, 'I say! This is another universe, you know!'

A glory of sunset colouring bathed in gold the grey and brown weathering of the volcanic crags whose tumbled masses formed the first precipitous slope beneath us. A few hundred feet down began a belt of the magnificent Canary pines, dwindling from the nearest monarch, visibly gigantic, to a distant featheriness of dark green shot with the red-gold of sunlit stems and branches, beyond which the single giants that had strayed from the belt a little way into the shelving plain below might have been the tiniest of dwarf trees. The plain, a long sweep down to the coast, was sheeted with almond blossom. All around, the Atlantic basked and gleamed illimitably, shading off at the high, indefinable horizon into the vibrating opalescence of the sky's margin, an opalescence that cleared into deepening blue above, and warmed through palest yellow to full orange as it neared the sun.

After a long pause to take in the marvel of it all, and to watch the afterglow creep up, richer gold than ever, we started downwards, deeply moved, scarcely heeding the feats of equilibrium by which our mules negotiated the sudden turns and drops of the rocky path. (We had soon learnt that they knew best how to pick their way, wisely disregarding any inexpert

attempt at guidance.) I remember questioning whether Palma could possibly live up to the first impression that it had given us. Ford turned to our muleteer with a remark in his fluent Spanish upon the beauty of the island. The man replied with a grave smile that it was 'quiet,'[1] but that here men were happy. 'I can believe it,' said Ford to him, and 'that sounds good enough!' to me.

The dusk came up and met us as we entered the pine-belt, and the sound of shod hoofs upon bare rock was quieted by a carpeting of pine-needles, and presently out of the darkening silence we were overtaken by lights and voices, and a party of women carriers, basket on head, came swinging bare-footed down the difficult path with little torches of resinous pine-splinters in their hands. Erect and supple, warm-skinned and clear-eyed, they made a very gracious picture in the flickering glow that spaced them out against the dusky forest as our party halted to greet them and to take light from them for torches of our own. Ford fell into talk with them and the muleteer as we went on together, still, I think, following up our half-uttered train of thought about a place that should unite with its beauty of aspect a correlative beauty of human character. I missed the greater part of the talk (my Spanish was still in the elementary stage);

[1] I should translate his *quieto* as 'peaceful,' if it were not for the *pero* ('but') that succeeded it. It is thus that we in the country use the word 'quiet' to warn the urban visitor not to expect variety entertainments.

but I could hear at least the open frankness of their tones, and when at length the women took a by-path, calling out good-nights, Ford drew to my side radiant with enthusiasm. 'That 's the sort of person to be!' was his exordium, and he went on to dwell upon the blessings of the unsophisticated life. Doubtless these jolly people had their own sophistications (they had: we were yet to see the ladies of Palma on a Sunday, their figures constrained into black dresses of a parodied European cut, their natural tan obliterated with rice-powder); but these things could be nothing to the fundamental genuineness of their lives. They looked at you and spoke to you like children, but like wise, mature children, and with an instinctive, unconscious poetry of gesture and utterance. They were humanity with its feet on the real earth. 'We 're going to learn a lot in this place,' Ford summed it up. I felt sceptical —I also felt tired, for we had been thirty-six hours awake—and inclined to refer his enthusiasm to a purely æsthetic cause; but he had simply made a jump to the truth, as was his way. The people of Palma were uniquely natural; though when I woke the next morning in the primitive inn that we had made our *pied-à-terre* to find a dozen of them in my bedroom admiring and discussing such clothes as I had unpacked and scattered overnight, my eighteen-year-old prudery was disposed to think that naturalness could be carried too far. But Ford, looking in, was delighted with the incident, and expounded my ward-

robe to my callers with great freshness and zest before they withdrew, politely wishing us good morning.

From the little inn at El Paso we began to make exploration of Western Palma. The island consists of the inner and the outer slopes of a very large, long-extinct volcano,[1] and we had come to it chiefly in order to follow up von Buch's theory of volcanic origins—a fine piece of large-scale objective work that Ford had planned for the widening of my scientific horizon; but he now postponed the study of the crater, which was to have been our first objective, for the sake of the more vital education that we should acquire together (as he put it) by looking into the nature of a human society that promised something like a revelation of human values.

We talked with our stalwart innkeeper, a mine of information and of wise commentary upon local affairs, always keen to exchange with us details and aspects of our respective civilisations (he decided in the end, when Ford had overcome the reluctance of his

[1] *Geography of Palma.*—Cut a pear in half and put one half upon a plate with the cut surface downwards and the stalk end pointing south. At the top scoop out a conical hole nearly as deep as the thickness of the half-pear and a little wider than half the pear's breadth. On the south-western side cut a ravine that allows the juice to drain from the bottom of the hole on to the plate. The hole represents the crater of Palma, broken down on its south-west side, and the juice the river that flows through the break to the sea; and if you carved the rest of the half pear into ridges and mirror ravines, leaving a steep main ridge from the crater to the southernmost point, you would have a very fair rough representation of the island in exaggerated relief.

courtesy, that he preferred his own—though he confessed to a child-like longing to see a railway train or a motor car, modern miracles, to him, of equal incredibility); we talked with a marvellously wrinkled old woman who wove silk, pure cocoon silk of the rarest quality, upon a hand-loom generations older than herself, and she told us much—but not her opinion of machine-looms, for she persisted in regarding them as an imaginative joke of Ford's; we talked with a grizzled goatherd among the crags who, when fairly launched upon a description of the ways of goats that had all the quality of a Georgic, broke off at sight of Ford's intent face to turn to me, with a wave of his hand towards Ford, and utter the single word 'Hermoso!'[1] in a tone as heartfelt as it was unaffected (I admired the equally frank composure with which Ford received and put aside the high compliment), before the narrative about his goats resumed its course. We made one open and friendly acquaintanceship after another around the countryside, and more than confirmed our muleteer's opinion. Here, indeed, men could be very happy. I asked Ford what he thought was the matter with them all. 'Well, to begin with,' he said, 'there are no poor here—and no rich.'

We went in search of rich folk, and tramped down through banana groves to Tazacorte, the coast town

[1] Untranslatable; but, roughly, something between our words 'handsome' and 'beautiful.' The derivation from Hermes gives the best clue to a further meaning.

where we were told that wealthy merchants lived. They had heard from afar, by the immemorial wireless communication of the Canary people—a whistling code that seems to have attained an extraordinary perfection of expressiveness—that the notorious English visitors were coming, and we descended the steep chimney of a by-street, to find a black-coated deputation awaiting us, courtly and amicable, in the market square. Apparently they had been at pains to discover, from some linguist among them, the correct English salutation; the phrase was not exactly right, but they bowed and said 'Good-bye' with an intonation which reassured us that it was welcome, not prompt valediction, that they intended. They contended for the privilege of entertaining the strangers, and the victor regaled us with a luncheon of remarkable liberality and interest, and brought out for the occasion a bottle of Canary wine that had a venerable delicacy of flavour. Here, unmistakably, was our typical rich man of Palma; and the task of drawing him out was no test of Ford's skill in this direction. He took a simple-minded pleasure in laying bare to us all the schemes and subtleties of a captain of industry; and then he took us round his estate and his fruit-packing sheds to show us his work and his workers in the concrete. We inspected critically and exhaustively, as though our kindly host had been our bitterest enemy.

When we got home Ford declared that his search for any sign of unhappiness or discontent in western

Palma was at an end. It was time, he said, for us to go about our geological business, investigate the crater, and try meanwhile to digest the incomprehensible phenomenon presented by an entirely happy race of people.

Our landlord took into his own hands the arrangements for our camp in the Caldera,[1] and found out through that extraordinary facility of communication by word of mouth which always astonishes the traveller in regions where no other communication exists (in this case, surely, the Canary code of whistling signals could not have been employed) that we should be welcome to the use of certain eligible caves, sometimes tenanted by goatherds, which opened upon a large and a not too accessible ledge below the steepest of the crater-wall, within reach of a spring. Here he proposed to send us a mule daily (it would be the best part of a day's journey there and back) with fresh milk and provisions. A friendly altercation arose between him and Ford over this plan. We were paying ten pesetas a day (about 7s.) for taking up the whole of the small accommodation of the inn; and we had found that Don Antonio's idea of an inclusive charge precluded our offering a halfpenny for any extra requirements—even for the handsome brass candlesticks that he bought for us when we wanted more light of

[1] Crater. I detest a description of travel that is peppered with avoidable foreign terms, but I must be allowed this word (which we always used for the wonderful place) if only for its cadence. The accent falls, of course, upon the long *e*.

an evening—without grieving him deeply. Now he maintained with the tenacity of a Shylock that the contract must still hold good. Mule-hire, the only expensive necessity in the island (for mules have to be imported) would come to 7½ pesetas a day; and on the remainder he claimed the right to furnish us with camp equipments and provisions, also keeping our rooms inviolate till our return. All Ford's resources of dialectic were in vain; Don Antonio stood there on his bond. We could only determine to take it out of him when the time came to make him a parting present.

We had thought of the Caldera as a geological object-lesson; we found it a wonderland. As we rode up the great sinuous ravine that leads to it the crags towered higher and higher, till as we rounded the final bend their steep slopes parted, scissor-wise, to reveal the distant ridge of the enormous bowl. Then we turned to mount the left-hand slope of the ravine by a winding path that denied a further view, till at long last we came out upon a ledge in the Caldera itself, some five thousand feet up. The encircling rim, nine miles across, was another two thousand feet above, and the dark cliffs rose to it ever more precipitously; below us sloped less steeply a vast ridged amphitheatre of pine forest that broke into green valleys far below. The sun was nearing the western cliff-edge that almost overhung us as we wound along the track, and when at length we had unloaded and, the mules dismissed, had made our simple preparations for the evening, the

crater was filled with the luminous golden haze that heralded the sunset. The atmospheric colour deepened and brightened till the cliffs at the furthest edge might have been carved out of new, shimmering bronze. Suddenly, deep violet shadow struck the forest depths below us, and spread down, down to the bottom and then slowly up the further side, engulfing the gold in mystery. At last the distant, burnished ridge stood out alone beneath a sky of vibrating blue, and above a cavernous hemisphere of purple twilight; and we watched the still-ascending shadow till the last peak (it shone like a planet) had been swallowed up, and the Caldera lay in a dream of grey dusk beneath the dome of sapphire that deepened overhead.

Our human needs of supper and the warmth of a camp fire seemed petty, as Ford remarked, after so stupendous a sight, and the ruddy blaze of our fire and its glow upon neighbouring rocks and tree-trunks, disturbing a thousand flickering shadows, suggested a tremulous attempt in miniature to emulate the glory that we had seen. It was natural that Ford's talk should tend, as he put it, towards a justification of man's doings in the face of Nature, and, more particularly, towards an effort for comprehension of our Palma friends' innate happiness. 'Happiness is our first justification for living,' I remember that he premised, 'if it isn't our last.'

I must paraphrase Ford, if I am to attempt a rendering of his thesis that evening, as closely as my

memory will serve me after a thirteen years' interval. 'Let 's suppose something,' he said (this was always a favourite gambit of his), 'and see how it works.' His supposition was that natural beauty works upon the mind of man, when nothing is present to pull the mind out of harmony with it, like a kind of moral magnetism, continually and imperceptibly drawing thought and action into kinship with itself. To my commonplace query whether people born and brought up in surroundings of the most inspiring beauty did not grow up insensitive to them through sheer habituation, he answered, 'Let 's suppose that they appreciate them unconsciously, just as a man who has always been truthful and brave, let us say, goes on caring for truth and is continually showing courage in its defence without a moment's consciousness that he 's doing anything out of the way. Now then—take the saying, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' That isn't morals, it 's æsthetics. We all understand it to mean that it 's finer—it 's more beautiful. And here we have these people who have got a sense of beauty—so we 're supposing—and they carry it out, simply and naturally. They prefer Give to Get as a matter of taste. Well, Give happens to be a very much better working philosophy of life, when every one carries it out at once as they do; and the result is sound economics and general contentment. And contented people can spare an eye for the beautiful—and there we are back at the beginning of the circle.'

I set him off again by bringing to light a doubt that had been underlying my own appreciation of the delightful Palma temperament. They surely could not be in any way progressive; one could not see them mounting to any higher level of mind, or producing a literature or an art; they seemed fated to go round and round in the circle of which he had spoken, happy, but always on the same unaltering plane of happiness. Nine-tenths of them, for instance, were illiterate and seemed likely to remain so. Ford agreed that happiness in a closed circle was a vain thing, and then lit up with a new idea—I paraphrase him again: 'The circle 's only a foundation, a basis. These people have got the right basis of happiness. But you can't see the fun of it unless it 's a basis they can build upon to raise themselves. Well, look here; suppose the circle is really a spiral—at each circuit they find themselves a bit higher up than before. If so, it 's a spiral that must rise jolly slowly, I grant you. But what are the things that twist people's circle of happiness upwards? Your mind jumps to literature and art as the visible signs of a rise in the scale, with reading and writing for a first beginning. Education 's the force that sets the spiral mounting at a respectable angle; but education 's no earthly use until you 've got a sound circle of happiness to start from. When your life just zig-zags about aimlessly from one discontent into another, it 's no particular fun to have education twisting you up and letting you down again.

That 's what happens to us civilised Europeans, for the most part ; we 've got the education, of a kind, but not the sound basis of life for it to work from. These people have got the basis, but not the education.'

I asked him what he meant by education, and he gave me a definition that impressed me enough to make me write it down afterwards. ' One generation takes pains to shape its experience into a ladder by which the next can climb—that 's all.' And he went on to abandon his metaphor of a spiral of progress for a figure in which each generation made its own circle of happiness and achievement, and raised from it ladders by which the next could climb to another and a higher circle. The resulting structure we call a civilisation ; and when either the base is faulty or the successive circles become increasingly distorted, the civilisation topples. The civilisation of the Athenians depended upon slavery ; that was the fatal kink in their basic ' circle of happiness.' Roman civilisation, better based (Ford intensely admired the early Romans), became twisted out of recognition when Rome became a parasite upon conquered provinces. European civilisation . . . well, Europe had a good deal to learn from places like Palma and Palestine before it could consider itself in any way safe. Palma was a working model, not of human life at its highest and finest, but of humanity upon a sound primary basis. On this partial conclusion we let the problem rest, and turned to the question of

bed-making upon a basis of hay left by the goatherds in our caves. The hay proved a deliciously aromatic mattress, and the stars in the night sky at the cave's mouth were magnificent, though we should not have watched them for so long if that hay had been less full of entomological interest. Ford declared, next morning, that fleas had formed a complete circle of happiness around his waist—of course upon the debased, parasitic level of Get, not Give.

The projected geological work claimed our days, and we studied the Caldera with fair thoroughness, clambering, hammering, measuring, calculating; and it was only at intervals, and, as he liked to put it, for fun, that Ford recurred to the simple main principle which had emerged of its own accord from his supple handling of our discussion. It has always seemed to me fundamental, as the groundwork of any philosophy of life whether for the individual or for a society. Happiness, for any creature above the level of *pulex irritans*, is found, ultimately, only in giving; and real giving is possible only to those who possess happiness, since in the last analysis happiness is the only gift that there is. This Ford called a 'virtuous circle.' I remember wondering, naïvely enough, why so clear and simple a first principle had not become translated by now into universal human practice. Ford, smiling at the colossal dimensions of the question, gave as a grain of explanation that a virtuous circle was always mistrusted and decried—'sour grapes, you know'—

by people who couldn't see their own way into it. I recall from another talk, following upon the arrival of our mule-boy with a mail that brought disquieting news from home, that a misgiving of mine rose to expression whether Ford were not giving to happiness too basic a position in human life as it has to be lived. I had been taught to attach a certain dignity to suffering; and there was the question of the stimulus of unhappiness—the phrase 'divine discontent' lurked somewhere at the back of my mind. Ford jumped at once, not to a modification but to an extension of his thesis. Discontent is good when it is the straining out after a happiness that can be seen but cannot yet be reached, and the standard of this high discontent is raised upon the standard of happiness that has preceded it. Discontent without the underlying belief in joy is stagnant, a breeder of diseases. And the dignity of suffering depends upon its being borne with joy, or with the grim variant of joy that is called fortitude. It is the pre-existing standard and quality of happiness that determines the dignity. There is no beauty in suffering itself, but only in the human spirit that is too great to be submerged by it.

I am setting down very clumsily the few things that I can recall with any clearness of Ford's philosophising as we roamed the Caldera, or talked in the twilight after the daily miracle—it never grew less miraculous—of the Caldera sunset. I miss his freshness of simile

and illustration ; and I can never hope to make words express the way in which his face would light up with the development of an idea, the radiation that came from him of pure joy in an intellectual quest. The equality in which he let me stand to him was a continual marvel. He made nothing of the immaturity of an opinion or a criticism, and never dreamed of using his skill to make a mere debating point in favour of his argument at the moment. With a theory in the full flood of exposition he would pause to take up an objection due as much to slowness of wit as to the sight of any flaw in his statement, and would examine and reinterpret it with all his power of sympathetic understanding, finally working it, transformed, into the structure of his own thesis. He gave me a most inspiring sense that I really participated in and brought material to the building. It is when I come to reconstruct that I find out how far he was beyond me all the time.

One day we took a holiday from volcanic origins and went down through the pine-belt and the lower ravines to the bottom of the Caldera. We could see from our ledge that there was a house down by the stream—the tiniest of dolls' houses it looked—and we had seen human specks crawling about the green slopes around it ; and the many fig-trees around the spot, bare of leaves at this season, and each a tangle of grey branches that looked from so far above like a small, fixed puff of pale blue smoke, told of deliberate planting. We

inferred a farmstead, and took no food with us. A longer descent than we had looked for, lengthened by the necessity of climbing again and again out of one ravine that persistently led us off our line and into another that repeated the misguiding, brought us sweltering and famished to the door of the farmhouse well on into the afternoon. Our knocking brought out a crumple-faced old woman, octogenarian at least, but of remarkable sprightliness. She knew all about us, and was full of regrets that we had not sent warning of our distinguished visit—our mule-boy could have passed on the word, she said. As it was, the young folk were out at work, beyond call, and alas! she had no meal to offer that the Señores could touch. Ford explained that we were in a condition to touch anything eatable, and she brought out amid a shower of apologies, diversified by gleams of laughter over the thought of the Señores eating anything so plebeian, *gofio*, which is maize-meal, half-malted, and dried figs —little black, knobby things, satisfyingly resistent to the hungry jaw. *Gofio* puzzled us—we had each our little heap of the brownish, coarse flour. Our hostess instructed us to eat it, dry with fingers and thumb. Now the native eats *gofio* in small pinches at a time, and for a sufficient reason; the stuff turns glutinous in the mouth, absorbing moisture with the avidity of quicklime, and a small teaspoonful taxes one's salivary glands to the utmost. Ford and I hungrily took sizeable mouthfuls and were bereft of speech for many

minutes, while the old lady crowed with merriment at our industrious mouthings.

'Lord, that 's a tiring food!' gasped Ford, when at length he was able to gasp again. My response was interrupted by an uncontrollable peal of laughter from the old lady. It was the first time she had heard a foreign language, and it struck her as the funniest thing in the world. Ford realised that this was the reason of her mirth, and only made it worse by explaining the fact, still in English, to me. 'But I don't understand! I don't understand!' the old lady protested, and went off into fresh peals of laughter. When she had recovered a little we began, by way of homoeopathic treatment, to give her single words for things. 'Plate,' we said, pointing. 'Fig.' 'Hat.' It was no use. The only answer was '*Yo no comprende!*' and another peal. She found it so glorious a joke that we made no further attempt to spoil it by elucidation.

Having disposed of the rest of our *gofio*—it is excellent stuff when you go the right way to work with it—and munched our figs, we evoked the Comic Spirit again by wanting to pay for our entertainment. 'Money! For *gofito*!'[1] Really, her glance seemed to say, the famed Señores Ingleses were proving the most comical of people! Her eyes still twinkled with amusement as we said good-bye. Ford was delighted with the

[1] 'A little *gofio*.' The Canary people carry the Spanish love for the diminutive '*-ito*' to any extreme.

whole incident, and declared that the old woman's laughter was shaking down and settling many things in his mind. It *was* ridiculous to go about tendering bits of money for the small human services that are far sweeter if they are left as gifts. 'It isn't paying, it 's tipping,' he said; and went on to speak of tips as part of the machinery that bolsters up our sham superiorities. Other people in Palma had obviously thought us mannerless for certain offers of money, and we had wondered where they drew the dividing line beyond which payment became an offence; Ford saw now that they draw it where payment took on the nature of a tip. Free people don't tip one another.

And difference of language, when you came to think of it, was funny enough for anything. We could not see the joke of it with the perfect freshness of mind that the old woman had brought to bear, but we could see the same joke on a smaller scale when two people of the same tongue but of different thought fell into a discussion—it was the stock humorous resource of writers of light comedy. A great part of the comedy of life, as of its tragedy, came of mutual cross-purposes, and only humour prevented these from being all tragedy. Suppose, now, that we had known no Spanish, and had failed to make the old woman understand that we were hungry! She would have had a monopoly of the humorous view of the situation. Ford went on whimsically to reconstruct a lost chapter in the story of the Tower of Babel: when the confusion of

tongues began, half the builders grew hot and angry about it and threw bricks at one another, while the other half were too weak with laughter to get on with the work. And humanity consists of the descendants of those two groups—by now somewhat intermixed, though the pure strain emerges now and then.

Seeing him in such a mood for the drawing of morals I demanded an interpretation of *gofio*. There was no difficulty about that. *Gofio*, obviously, was the analogue of information—facts—the kind of stuff they teach you at school. A pinch at a time that one could moisten and masticate was good and nutritious; ladled out by the spoonful it was dust and ashes in the mouth. This, of course, led to a discussion of education that lasted until long after we had got back to our cave-home. But I am reserving the attempt to reproduce Ford's views on education for another chapter.

By this time we had long abandoned our plan for a spring journey through North Africa and Italy. At first we had thought that we were only postponing this phase of our projected tour to the latest reasonable date; but even then Palma had hold of us, and soon we knew that we should be wasting something more than the tourist's opportunity to see, and afterwards to say that he has seen, an interesting diversity of places, if we failed to soak in as much of Palma as our utmost time-limit would allow. When we returned in April to El Paso and to Don Antonio's inn, after six weeks in the Caldera, it was to stay there until nearly

the end of May, seeing more of our old friends—' old ' to us in our character of returned adventurers—reviving and revising earlier impressions and testing them for false tints of rose now that the first blush of enthusiasm had worn off, rather than breaking fresh ground. El Paso stood every test that we could apply. It was a very delightful place to come back to.

What was it, in brief, that Ford ' soaked in ' during the whole of this time ? The central impression of the place and its people seems to me as definite as the meaning of a movement in a Beethoven symphony, and as indefinable. There was a unique harmony between natural beauty and fundamental human values. . . .

I think the formula that Ford threw off, that first evening in the Caldera, is as explanatory as any that can be conveyed in words. He had seen human life revolving in its natural orbit. He had realised the full circle, the perfect round of which only the broken arcs—arcs of a larger circle, however, which has yet to find its completion—are to be found in the complex civilisation of Europe. He had seen happiness as a norm of man's existence, and he had seen, springing from the soil of happiness, ' the deep desire to give and give again ' that shows most nobly, it is true, as a character of the troubled spirit, but only when that spirit has made happiness its inner foundation. He brought from Palma a certain tranquillity that was proof against many of the doubts and despairs by which we are beset. Always deeply concerned for humanity,

he never found his idealism disappointed into a doubt of human potentialities. He had known a reality that gave a permanent foundation to the ideal, and it made him fearless in facing realities that seemed to contradict the ideal. And with a firm footing upon this reality he was to reach upward and grasp a conception of individual life that made him a force among those with whom and for whom he worked, and an enigma to those whom he passed upon his way. From his time in Palma onwards Ford was his own man.

CHAPTER VII

NOTHING could have been in more acute contrast with Ford's deep impression of Palma than his next experience of a human society—the 'society,' in the shallower sense of the word, of a big cosmopolitan hotel, the centre of a fashionable resort in Switzerland. We came to St. Moritz by the quickest route—*viâ* London—arriving in the first week of June, a month before the first assembling of the folk whose holiday movements are recorded in public print; for a full month the wonders of a Swiss midsummer were our chief concern; but this period seemed in later perspective to have been only a preparation—the setting of majestic scenery for the entrance of characters absurdly incongruous.

Our first friend at St. Moritz, Wieland the guide, a great brown bear of a man with the instincts of a child, was another matter. We identified him directly we had him among his mountains as a true Swiss exponent of the Palma spirit. Ford was delighted with a remark of his when we were on the way to our first real climb—the Piz Julier. Starting at three in the morning we had driven, half asleep, some distance up the road that skirts the southern slopes of the mountain on its way to the Julier Pass. Ford and I dozed on

the back seat of the aged landau. Wieland, massively huddled upon the seat facing us, with his back to the driver, suddenly stretched himself, yawned, and pointed to the distance behind us. 'Kommt die stolzie[1] Bernina heraus,' he observed. We looked back. The Engadine valley lay in blue-grey twilight that brightened to the clear azure of piled-up snow-peaks beyond, against a deep ultramarine sky still twinkling with stars. The summit of the 'proud Bernina' had just caught the first shaft of the rising sun, and stood out in clear, full rose-pink of wonderful purity. The unconscious poetry of Wieland's phrase exactly described the mountain's rose-crowned dignity. *Incedit vera dea.*

Afterwards, as we talked, Ford asserted Wieland's absolute human superiority, upon his own ground, to any of the climbers whom he escorted. He was their minister, and a minister who knew the mysteries that he served. All the members of the Alpine Club put together could not have mustered the three-o'clock-in-the-morning courage to utter, if they could have thought of it, a phrase about a mountain's soul that he threw off between a yawn and a chuckle. He was *there*; his clients were ephemeral. The very fact that he was there, incidentally, to risk his life for them if they got into difficulties made his superiority finally impregnable. He would do it with such magnificent unconcern—for its own sake rather than for theirs. He would save a life (it was not he who told us that he

[1] I must render the pretty Swiss variant of the German final *e*.

had saved three on one occasion, at the expense of a permanent rope-mark round his waist) as he would salute the proud Bernina, without the complicated trouble that we call a motive.

'I say,' Ford suddenly interrupted himself, 'isn't a conscious motive always the result of a mental conflict?' He mused, staring as though he had stumbled upon a significant train of thought. (We were resting, after a day's climb with Wieland, on a terrace that looked down upon the St. Moritz Lake.) Then he went on to argue that a conscious motive must always be an imperfect motive, an impulse not assured enough to do without deliberate justification; not the less valuable for that, but, from the very fact of its being conscious, a mere crude approximation, a stepping-stone, to the true motivation that is unconscious ('inspired,' Ford put it) and gets things done purely for their own sake, or for the sake of the spiritual need that is fulfilled in the doing.

This is to summarise very briefly the gist of a rambling talk, the talk in which a man, physically tired, lets his mind and his tongue run on as they will, without any such 'conscious motive' as Ford was himself, as he talked, beginning to analyse. Perhaps he analysed the better—the more intuitively—for the tiredness that gave him full excuse for letting his thought roam at ease; I remember a sense that subtle undercurrents of meaning flowed unregarded beneath the surface of his discursive, casual statement, and I

have since recalled that half-hour again and again to explain a side of Ford's outlook and of his character which left many people bewildered. He was to form decisions and to act upon them with such 'magnificent unconcern'—to borrow the phrase that he himself used of Wieland's matter-of-fact heroism. But it was later on that this element in his nature manifested itself; that conversation seemed at the moment isolated, the curious, irrelevant, vital offshoot of an active brain half-bemused by the fatigue of his quiescent body.

Philosophy, climbing (with a sub-interest in glacial action), and a delight that was not exclusively botanical in the June efflorescence of the Alps were the chief features of the tutorial scheme that Ford had in mind for my time in Switzerland. The end of June was to have been the end of my six months abroad, but when the final week drew near I wrote home to beg for an extension and was granted two months' further leave. I have often felt irrationally glad that I thus forwarded, unknowingly, a train of circumstance which put a great work and a great happiness within Ford's reach. If he had left Switzerland in June he would have been most unlikely ever to have met the Wisharts.

The July irruption of tourists drawn from the most fashionable strata filled us with despair. We thought at first of flight and of concealing the disgrace of our quiet tastes in humbler surroundings, but Ford's final verdict—again fateful—was that we had better see it

through. We were out for realities ; in Palma we had seen one kind of social reality, and at St. Moritz we had the opportunity to see another kind, at the opposite extreme. Artificiality, he maintained, must be counted among the realities if you are taking civilised people into the reckoning.

There were people who did little but play golf, where the flowers had been mown away to make a course, under the gaze of the snow-peaks ; there were people who danced by night and talked the scandal of European capitals by day ; there were people who talked Art, read poetry, and played upon the excellent grand piano in the hotel drawing-room (one elderly Viennese lady played Beethoven with exactly the beauty of touch and phrasing that is appropriate to the lighter passages of Mozart) ; there were people—these we liked best—who had come to be jolly, and were jolly ; but there was no one who fitted the Switzerland that we had begun to realise. And as Ford said, Why should they ? None of them belonged to Wieland's universe, or could pass through it seeing with Wieland's eyes, for the single reason that they did not want to ; and those whose attitude frankly confessed their lack of desire for the real Switzerland were infinitely better company than those who thought it incumbent upon them to yearn by moonlight or to gush by day whenever they could remember to do so.

Mr. Wishart came to us one day, in the crowded dining-room of the hotel, like a breath of fresh air.

There was no table vacant, and the head waiter brought him to ours with the audible assurance that we were pleasant gentlemen. He explained in the crisp accent of the cultivated Scotsman that he had walked over from Pontresina to prospect for further easy climbs, befitting an elderly man, with the idea of spending a few days at St. Moritz later on for their accomplishment. By way of a sample, Ford and I took him up the little Piz Nair—a mere afternoon stroll that gives a wonderful view—and as we mounted the easy path Ford fell into talk with him at once. His shrewd, terse openness had taken Ford's fancy from the start, and he for his part fell an immediate victim to Ford.

As we came down again he invited us to walk back to Pontresina and dine with him *en famille*, and we accepted. The family proved to be his daughter Margaret and two sons, one older than she was, the other—an Edinburgh undergraduate—a few years younger. Mr. Wishart had been a widower for some years. The talk at dinner consisted chiefly in a relation of the doings of the trio during their father's absence; they had been exploring odd corners of the Morteratsch glacier, and the eldest son, an engineer, was impressed by Ford's knowledge of glacial action, and was soon bombarding him with knotty questions. After dinner we had coffee out of doors, and the conversation became more discursive and general. I ought to be able to record some small, significant exchange of words, or at least the passing of a glance

that lingered on its way, between Ford and Margaret Wishart; but I was immersed with her younger brother in Scottish public school shop—we were both Edinburgh Academicals—and had no premonition of a biographer's duty. I only remember that Ford and Mr. Wishart, perhaps catching an echo of our gossip about Academy masters and boys, began a discussion of public school education and then of education as a whole. Miss Wishart, I think, played a listening part; her elder brother, not greatly interested, presently fell out and made a third in the Edinburgh talk. But the picture of Ford and the two Wisharts, father and daughter, sitting a few yards from us, silhouetted against the hazy distance of twilight, has remained with me as something significant—no doubt in virtue of events that were to follow.

Ford and I walked back to St. Moritz in the moonlight, charged with the task of finding a week's accommodation there for the Wishart family. Ford became articulate in praise of Mr. Wishart, who was one of the rare people, he said, who seem really to know what they are after—the kind of man to see instinctively what is worth doing, and, having seen, to do it as a matter of course.

They came over a few days later, to a pension not far from our hotel, and for the time we were practically attached to their party. The final grouping of the evening at Pontresina tended to persist: Mr. Wishart could not see too much of Ford, and Miss Wishart

accompanied them upon the unadventurous climbs that her father affected, while the two brothers, both experienced climbers, very kindly took me under their care for some more difficult work. I am afraid my gratitude was not so whole-hearted as it might have been. I missed my Ford. The more exciting the expedition, the flatter it seemed without his participation and his commentary. I became irrationally jealous, not of Mr. Wishart, the real monopolist, but of his daughter, the comparatively passive agent, and looked out sulkily for signs of Ford's preoccupation with her, or hers with him. I must confess to feeling a sense of property in him. After all, he was my tutor. Ford, meanwhile, was glad that I should climb with men who really knew the business, and in the evenings tried to draw me out over the events of the day, puzzled no doubt by the taciturnity of my unconfessed resentment. Miss Wishart divined the reason of my huffishness, though not its apprehensive focus upon herself, and tried once or twice to thaw me by talking sympathetically of Ford and of the debt that I must owe to him. I can see, now, how spontaneously gracious was the attempt; but the perversity of a jealous mind could see nothing in her overtures but a preliminary to pumping me about Ford, and the appeal of her quiet charm was distorted into a subtle form of attack against which I steeled myself.

It was with an unholy joy that I saw the family leave at last for home, Mr. Wishart reaffirming to Ford

a cordial invitation (a crowning offence!) to go and stay with them when we should return. My temperamental foolishness did not long outlast their departure, but faded through a slight awkwardness—I was used to freedoms of self-revelations with Ford, but this was beyond my eighteen-year-old powers of confession—into oblivion. None the less I had lost my chance of realising the first vague inception of an educational scheme that Ford and Mr. Wishart had been concocting, a scheme that Mr. Wishart's practical idealism was already half prepared to set in motion; for Ford, seeing that to mention the name of Wishart was to find me inexplicably glum and unreceptive, refrained from talking about the project of which his mind must then have been very full, and I only learnt of it later, when it was complete.

The fast-dwindling remainder of our time of travel was tinged with a slight flavour of this buried awkwardness, though the sullen temper that had been its cause had evaporated. In any case, I should have hated the feeling that my unique monopoly of Ford's mind was drawing daily nearer to its term; and the Wishart incursion had pointed the grievance by exemplifying the readiness of an outside world to claim him. Ford sensed the existence of the hollow that was forming in me, with its dull, anticipatory ache that kept rising to the conscious surface, submerging the desire to make our last days the jolliest and the best of all; and I was grateful that no convention of artificial modesty

made him do me the injustice of pretending that the approaching end of an enjoyable time abroad was all my trouble. The common observance of professing oneself impotent to evoke love had no meaning for him, though I believe he thought all the less, as a rule, of the impression he was making; he concealed no vanity in the matter because he had none to conceal. At this time he met, with extraordinary understanding and lightness of touch, my shy, clumsy efforts to show some final evidence of devotion, my eagerness to lose no grain of meaning in the least thing that he said. He gave me the only real solace I could have for the growing impendence of our separation by accepting frankly and naturally the small signs of affection and indebtedness that I tried to convey. I do not know the words that would render the quality of that serene, undemonstrative response, but its quiet spontaneity made a world's difference.

He met the Wisharts, I believe, soon after our return. Events that have no bearing upon these reminiscences of his thoughts and doings kept me alike from an Oxford career and from any fuller acquaintance with his movements than an occasional interchange of letters could supply; and of his letters (I did not keep them) I recall little that accounts for the important autumn of 1903. Its importance lies in two facts that I learnt from him later on. Mr. Wishart made a definite proposal of financing a school that Ford should run upon his own lines; and my old,

instinctive apprehension of Miss Wishart's significance in Ford's life began to be justified. Jealousy, like other atavistic and reprehensible instincts of the human mind, sometimes jumps to a true intuition. The two facts—I draw now upon my later knowledge—placed Ford in a dilemma. He wanted the school passionately; the opening pointed to the realisation of a cherished dream; and he viewed the attraction that was growing with a fine naturalness between himself and Miss Wishart as a matter of high privilege and promise; but in this he could not feel himself a free man. He was bound to Mary Worthington by a subtle code of honour in uncertainty. And as yet she had not responded to the letter that had announced his return to England. He decided that there was nothing for it but to temporise until he could be more sure of his bearings. At the least, he could avoid making Miss Wishart unhappy—he already saw that her happiness or unhappiness was near to being definitely thrown into the scale having no equipment of artificial self-deprecation to blindfold him to the fact. He fell back upon a sufficient truth, and told Mr. Wishart that he could not take on the management of a school until he had dug more deeply than hitherto into the records of past educational work. It was wholly true that he felt a need to study the writings and the experiences of men like Comenius, Pestalozzi, and Froebel before embarking, as they did, upon an individual venture in education. But it was also true that he needed to get away

and breathe—and wait. I do not know in what terms he told Miss Wishart about that waiting, but there was some understanding that he was to find out something more than his real attitude towards education. For Mr. Wishart, the plan for a school was in abeyance until the following autumn—the autumn of 1904—but by then the school was to be started, if, by then, Ford should find himself psychologically equal to the task. So Ford took rooms in Bloomsbury, and, with a reader's ticket for the library of the British Museum as his talisman, he diligently explored the life-stories of great educators in the past and—waited, with his own life-story in the balance.

Mary Worthington wrote from her married sister's house in the country, and Ford went down to see her there. They found all their old lines of communication still open; Ford recalled to himself Browning's wildly apt metaphor of the broken stick,

> 'How fresh the splinters keep and fine—
> Only a touch and we combine!'

And of splinters in the more palpable sense there seemed to be fewer than before their separation. Their old, deeply underlying difference was there, as much as ever—probably it was deeper and wider than ever; but the regard that they turned upon it had mellowed, somehow. They could differ without mental exacerbation. Each could accept the other's point of view as an inalienable fact, if not as truth.

It is a moot question whether it is possible to be

'in love' with two people at the same moment. But —to make a brief digression, for clearness, into a region of abstract personalities—when A, loving B, meets and is attracted to C, there must be at least a momentary wavering of the balance before it tips decisively in one direction or the other. Perhaps it was in such a moment that Ford met Mary Worthington again; at all events their meeting left him in two minds, and he could not be sure which of the two was veritably his own mind. The elements of the difficulty were hard to disentangle. Mary Worthington was his tried friend, his partner by unspoken compact in a relation that was peculiarly their own, a relation that must inevitably be broken if he gave himself wholeheartedly to another. 'I'm a natural monogamist, you know,' he said to me in talking of this time; I had questioned whether a true marriage could not co-exist with a unique friendship such as was his with Mary Worthington, and he was explaining for my benefit—I was in some need of his experience and guidance—the instinct that had then swayed him, as he had since thought it out. His point was that the 'unique friendship,' this kind of intellectual-spiritual relation, must necessarily be at war with the marriage relation, must needs, as he put it, 'break the full circle' that the marriage relation has to establish. The married 'circle of happiness' cannot be complete if one of the parties has to fly off at a tangent to secure an essential spiritual expression and satisfaction outside.

Ford's problem, in its simplest terms and as concerning his own happiness alone, was whether he could bear to leave Mary Worthington and all that their relation had meant to him, and, if he could, whether he would then be able to bring a whole personality, full and unpartitioned, to Margaret Wishart. But the problem was not in its simplest terms, and did not concern his own happiness alone. He had not consciously determined how he felt towards Miss Wishart; in escaping for the time out of the influence of their growing intimacy he had acted upon a hidden impulse of which the only conscious elucidation was his desire to be loyal to that other compact. I think it would be true to say that in the first development of his friendship with Miss Wishart he had seen, like a distant light that may or may not be the light of home windows, the potentiality of a complete and rounded happiness; and that he fled precipitately from the vision lest it should draw him further before he had made out clearly whether the old attachment were his true home or only the guest-house that had given him rare hospitality by the way.

It was not solely his own happiness that was in question, but he was impelled to make the solution of the triple complex, so far as his own action was concerned, solely his own problem. His flight from Miss Wishart had been to save her peace of mind, if her underthought should have begun to take the same direction as his own, from becoming further imperilled.

He had waited to put his relation with Mary Worthington again and finally to the test on its own ground, with any question of an alternative Miss Wishart left aside. If the test failed, if the long-standing barrier held, and he and Mary Worthington were not wholly for one another, he would go free—free and lonely, if the other light should prove to have been only a will-o'-the-wisp.

I have spoken of Ford's belief in the reciprocity of human affection—his conviction that that part of an attachment only is real which is returned, and that a one-sided emotion is mere mirage, springing from the self-deception of those who are in love with love, and project their general idea to enhalo a particular person. I see every reason to agree with Ford's conviction that but for this belief, which he and Mary Worthington shared, they would have married, and either made one another exceedingly unhappy or settled down to the dull truce that is the end of so many romantic-seeming unions. Their deep psychical attachment, so oddly lacking in certain essential links, ran an unusual course ; but in type it may be far from unusual. How many attachments may there not be that end (end, literally) in marriage ? Ford's experience opens up a wide but an obscure field of thought. As civilisation and the life of the mind develop, the different planes of intimacy upon which men and women can meet multiply endlessly. Comparatively few of these hold out promise for a complete union of lives ; but the

primæval mate-seeking instinct snatches at such intimacies to impose upon them its single interpretation. Ford and Mary Worthington had this experience in full and poignant measure, and struggled through it, with a sort of blind honesty, to the only true conclusion. How many, in like case, succumb to the easy, false conclusion ?

As a matter of psychological clarity, I am sorry not to know exactly how it was, and in what terms, that the two reached their decision that they were not for each other ; but as Ford's friend I am glad that the curtain has to be rung down before the concluding scene. It was his wish that his experience might do something to elucidate a difficult problem, but it is right that the laying bare of that experience should be qualified by a certain concluding privacy. He and Mary Worthington talked together twice, and parted ; and that ends—for me, upon a note of not unwelcome reticence—the story of their unique association.

Ford's later analysis of the abstract problem remains. I have often thought over that notion of his, that there are on the one hand a thousand possible intimacies between man and woman, the product of recent civilised developments of thought and consciousness ; and, on the other hand, the primordial sex instinct always ready to impose its own egoism and to turn good friendships into bad love affairs. Ford had an idea that this might go far to explain the undue proportion of unhappy or unsatisfactory marriages that

we see around us. What might be the right issue of these intellectual and psychical attractions, he could not say. They ought not to end in marriage, if the essential something else were not present; they could seldom continue indefinitely upon their own basis, except on condition of celibacy—and then discontent would supervene. Ford could only leave the ultimate solution to the future. For an immediate solution, he saw hope in the gradual growth of a better mutual understanding between the sexes, so that at least men and women were coming to realise more clearly and consciously where they stood in relation to one another, and to realise that not every magnetism spells marriage.

This balm of philosophic explanation came later; it did not soothe Ford's present hurt. He must have suffered, and suffered for a time excruciatingly, under a sense of intolerable loss—the loss of his old, unrealisable dream and of the realised comradeship that had meant so much to him. He knew it was a comradeship that could never be revived.

The way was first opened for me to hear of all this long episode, so vital in the story of Ford's experience, by one of those queer, untoward accidents that often wind up an actual story upon a note of anti-climax. Six months after Ford's parting with Mary Worthington—when (to anticipate a little) the arrangements for his school were in full train, and I, to my delight, had been invited to come and take part, as his pupil in the art of education—I heard the first breath of a malig-

nantly garbled scandal that had been set afloat. I infer the malignity from the form into which the tale, finally disentangled and partially run to earth, ended by resolving itself. The story that first roused my indignant incredulity was different enough. In this, as reported to my family by a friend who was 'alarmed to hear' of my proposed re-association with Ford, Mary Worthington had actually been translated into an apocryphal farmer's daughter, deflowered by Ford under promise of marriage, and deserted. This was too absurdly out of character for even a momentary spasm of doubt, and I carried my wrath and the crazy legend hot-foot to Ford, to know what he could make of the business. As an incipient headmaster he had of course everything to lose if such a rumour had a chance of spreading. Ford was as bewildered as I, and inclined merely to be amused. His amusement changed to the only consuming anger that I ever knew him to show as it came out (I will not dwell upon the unsavoury process of digging and sifting) that the original lie, before it underwent the comedy of change incident to underground currency, had concerned those last two interviews at the house of Mary Worthington's sister. It was an instructive study in the ways of Rumour. One friend, more loyal than wise, had declared that Mary had been 'badly treated.' (Miss Worthington, I believe, had never countenanced any such notion on her own behalf.) Another, a victim of the hysterical jealousy that it is kindest to consider

pathological, had seized the slightly ambiguous phrase and built upon it, knowing nothing of Ford except his name, an imaginary scandal that should settle Mary Worthington's reputation once and for all. Thence the story proliferated into a score of equally delectable reincarnations. In several it was not Ford, but one acquaintance or another of the Worthingtons' who was implicated. Ford was impelled, however, to go and thrash the whole matter out with Sir Joshua Worthington, and thus at length to get to the bottom of it. Naturally, he had to enter upon a complex of explanations with regard to past innocent secrecies; there were words, but the two ended by parting upon respectful if scarcely upon cordial terms. Ford did not try to see Mary Worthington again.

The one small seed of actuality from which the ugly absurdity had grown, the impression that Mary Worthington had in fact been 'badly treated,' stuck in Ford's mind. 'They really did think I had been faithless and ruthless,' he said, speaking of the Worthingtons' attitude towards the full story that had now been told of the friendship and its termination. I was angry over the bare idea at the time, but it is difficult, on reflection, not to see their point of view.

As they saw it, Ford had been clandestinely engaged to Mary Worthington, or semi-engaged, which was worse (they never came near to understanding what the rare relation had actually been, and could only decide that any alliance so perilously intimate that went

unratified by even a secret engagement was incomprehensible to the verge of the disreputable), and after allowing her to waste her freshest years in these intangible fetters had sheered off irresponsibly at the moment that seemed good to him. His apologia was not to be stated in terms that they could comprehend, but he did his best; and they seem to have concluded that he was genuine but incurably wrong-headed. Sir Joshua read him a lecture upon the heedless selfishness into which he had betrayed himself.

There was a certain inequitable justice in the indictment. Through the years of his comradeship with Mary Worthington, Ford had steadily and in part consciously disregarded the Worthington standard. He had always acted simply upon his instinctive conception of what was right in itself. Such a mode of life has its drawbacks, and half the business of life is to determine whether these drawbacks are worth taking into account. Any one who falls into the habit of listening for an inner voice and acting in accordance with its promptings, not in conformity with an accepted, all-adequate rule of thumb, must needs appear selfish at times to those who are out of the secret. In this the gentlest seeker for sincerity must share the burden of Nietzsche's trampling superman.

Ford's school came into being in the autumn of 1904. Mr. Wishart had at first wanted it to be a boarding-school, for the sake of keeping Ford's influ-

ence and method of discipline unbroken, but at length he came round to Ford's strong opinion in favour of a day school. I was asked to many of their discussions, so that when I should come to take my minor share in the work I might be well grounded in the substance of their conclusions; and I remember one talk in particular that brought out Ford's root objection to the boarding-school system. He traced to it two effective brakes upon the vital progress of upper- and middle-class people, attributing indeed to these two factors much of the obvious failure of the secure classes to justify their favourable handicap in life by producing either a high average of intelligence or a consistent standard of social goodwill. The first he spoke of as a 'cleavage between the generations' that divorces the thought and will of the young from that of their elders, and makes each of an endless number of families a house divided against itself. Going back to the genesis of each family unit, he said that people generally marry with some ideal, however inarticulate, in their minds—some dim notion that they are starting a vital chain of events springing from the glow of high emotion that, for all its human universality, is so uniquely and wonderfully their very own. The coming of children extends and intensifies the feeling. People when they have young children, for whom they desire all that is best in life, have an impulse towards the truest human values. They want to live finely, to create a free, joyous atmosphere in which the young

lives may grow up. This may be no more than a vague instinct, but it is one of the deeply rooted instincts that have come through long evolution, and it uniquely expresses an essential aspect of the human spirit's urge towards perfection. The next step for the family unit and, Ford maintained, a step without which there can be no true realisation of this high impulse, is to attain conscious expression of its ideal through interaction between the minds, the wills, and the characters of parents and children. Only by a continually growing reciprocity could the unit become integrated, a thing of meaning and purpose, a true centre of radiation. And just as children reach the age when conscious reciprocity begins to be possible, they are uprooted and sent away for transplantation into the artificial soil of a boarding-school community. At the best they keep a few roots still alive for brief, periodical retransplantation in the home soil; for the most part the distinctively home-seeking roots shrivel and become atrophied. Children home for the holidays are usually visitors, not vital intimates, in a home that is itself quickly becoming atrophied because in losing its young life it has lost its *raison d'etre*.[1] The older generation stiffens, in thought and impulse, more than the advance of physical age would warrant; the new pursues its own paths, unaided by experience that has

[1] Ford did not use an argument which experience seems to confirm—that when there are younger children still at home, the elder brother or sister home for the holidays displays a far less impenetrable coating of school-imposed reserve.

missed its natural season of mellowness; and when the new generation comes to the founding of its own homes, in the same rosy light of hope and expectation that inspired its predecessor, there is no conscious home-ideal for the foundation, no body of remembered knowledge and understanding of home life upon which to base the new venture. Ford saw in this round of causation quite half the reason (the muddle of our social economics providing the other half) for the total incompetence of many homes to give children any upbringing worth the name. The whole business, he said, had got into such a vicious circle that there was little wonder if a few upper-middle-class theorists had begun to condemn the institution of the home root and branch.

The second educational brake was in a way the reflex of the first. People among whom the artificial cleavage between the generations had become a matter of custom and acceptance for lack of any other vision, whose power to give a home education to their children had become paralysed by the operation of the vicious circle, naturally regarded teachers and schools—and even nurses and nursery governesses—as a means for getting rid of a responsibility that they were impotent to fulfil. It was as entirely right that the teacher should be called in to supplement the parental function as that the bootmaker should be called in to carry out the parental wish that children should have boots; but the trouble was that the parent tended to delegate

the whole responsibility to the teacher, and so to the teaching profession, which proceeded inevitably to evolve a stiff and cramping professional code of training—even as the bootmaking profession, uncontrolled by parental enlightenment, provided stiff and heavy boots that ruined children's feet, and the poise and grace of their movements.[1] Such was always the way with professions not kept in touch with intelligent expression of the needs that they existed to supply. The professional educator might complain of the commercial parent who demanded—almost the only parental demand crude and simple enough to become articulate, as things are—a business training rather than general culture for his son; but the professional educator himself was already providing far less of general culture than of another and an unwanted business training—a training in the business of passing examinations, of 'qualifying,' if for anything beyond, for nothing better than a mere trade in scholarships, including the trade of schoolmastering for the next generation upon the same lines. This was another vicious circle, from which true culture and scholarship had always to break away at a tangent, in virtue of the enthusiasm or the intellectual honesty of individuals, always in opposition and sometimes in painful opposition to the constraint of the system.

[1] The more general spread among doctors of a knowledge of orthopædics had begun by now to induce something approaching 'parental enlightenment' in this respect. The 'good strong school boot' was always one of Ford's bugbears.

Nothing better could be expected; again a lack of reciprocity was at the root of the trouble—reciprocity between educator and parent, between school and home. Homes that lost touch with their children, and so failed to fulfil their function as homes, could not affect the artificial and far more technical machinery of schools; parents who did not know their children's natures could not explain to their servants the schoolmasters what they wanted to have done with those natures. All that they could do was to let the business slide, and then exercise the human prerogative of grumbling at the result.

Ford was far from believing that by setting up a day school in Holland Road, he could demonstrate in action the ideal reciprocity between parent and teacher. Having analysed for us his view of the problem up to this point, he told his patron very definitely that he expected to achieve little in the way of parental co-operation. (Mr. Wishart had by now entirely agreed to the day-school plan.) The average parent would simply lack the impulse; and without the impulse, Ford declared, little could be done. He could only leave the channels open, welcome every inquiry and every sign of interest on the part of any parent, and take every opportunity of talking over some small co-ordination of school and home methods. But there would be a much greater chance of unconscious reciprocity through the children themselves. Ford launched into one of his electrical analogies. As

hanging pithballs dart to and fro between two surfaces that carry different electrical charges, bearing each its small charge across the intervening gap, gradually equalising the potential between the two, so the children would carry ideas from school to home and from home back to school, and thus home and school would react upon one another unconsciously and inevitably, in so far as there was vitality in either.

'You 're an insatiable man,' said Mr. Wishart drily, and turned to me to explain: 'He 's for educating the parents too—that 's all about it.'

Ford admitted the accusation cheerfully, saying that no education was of much value that had not that effect. Every new generation was an Aeneas that had to carry the old along or to leave it helpless behind.

Miss Wishart, who had been listening to the discussion in silence, remarked that at any rate she was glad that the school was not to be a boarding-school. A boarding-school, she said, was just an artificial orphanage. Ford had at this time a shyness, a certain tender diffidence, in direct talk with her, and said nothing, but he flashed a quick glance of appreciation for the felicitous simplicity of this brief formula for his thesis.

These preliminary discussions were concerned, for the most part, with questions of organisation and method that will find their place when I come to write of the school in being. Miss Wishart, when she was present, spoke little, and generally with the effect of

putting some carefully elaborated theory of Ford's under the test of its simplest human application, as though she had been afraid of being carried away by his power of statement and the force of his conviction. There was an occasion, during the time in which the first broad lines of the scheme were being laid down, when Ford confessed to a strong leaning towards co-education. He had been reading many arguments, he said, both for and against the idea of teaching boys and girls together, and had been quite unable to make out how all the trouble arose over a very simple matter. The plan of shepherding children into separate sex-herds was, and always had been as far as history recorded, the symptom of an unhealthy standard in regard to sex. It was obviously the normal and natural thing that boys and girls should be brought up in association with one another; as things were, they grew up in an ignorance of each other's ways and thoughts, of which the results were always tiresome and often tragic; segregation was the oddity, an oddity that a few civilisations, including our own, had learned to take for granted. In the same way the Mahomedan world had learned to take for granted the entire segregation of women, an equally absurd and convenient simplification of a vital problem. The only practical question was this: Had our standards, actually, fallen so low that the healthiness of childhood could not be trusted to put the fact of sex in its proper place? Or was it only that our native carelessness

had allowed a monastic precedent to become indurated and to gather accretions of custom and dignity till it took on the airs of a natural law? Ford inclined to the latter view. In so far as fear of the sex motive in children came in to support the custom of segregation, it must be a chimerical fear, rooted in the upside-down argument—or the bare, unargued supposition—that because sex was a potentially dangerous power, therefore the sexes had better be trained as foreigners to one another. 'You might just as well say,' Ford illustrated, 'if you found that grown-up Bengalis and Hindus had a way of flying at one another's throats when they met, that therefore Hindu and Bengali children ought always to be educated in separate schools.'

Mr. Wishart, like the majority of Scots people, had no instinctive prejudice against co-education, but he questioned the fitness of this racial analogy. In the case of the hypothetical Indian difficulty, he said, it would be a question of getting the children to like instead of hating one another; in the case of boys and girls the whole supposed danger was of their liking one another too much. But Ford maintained that 'liking' was exactly what had to be learned in both cases. The more girls and boys could find their reciprocity in liking one another, the less they would bother themselves with premature and imitative experiments in loving. And the sweeping, uncontrollable passion, he said, that gets people into trouble later on, was considerably more akin to hatred than to liking.

He turned to Miss Wishart, who had been playing Brahms to us after lunch before the talk had begun, to compare liking to the technique of music, and passion to its inspiration. When you know at sight how to finger and phrase a passage, the inspiration of music flows through you in pure joy ; the less you are at home with your instrument, the more the inspiration worries and tears at you, and the more you plunge into mistakes —crashing discords that you hate yourself for having produced the moment you hear them.

'You're wanting a kind of school of love, Mr. Ford,' Miss Wishart commented. That, she went on to imply, seemed to be going a long way.

'A grounding in the elements,' Ford laughed, and began to speak of the many-sided mutuality of interests that could and ought to grow up between girls and boys if romantic love, when it came in due course, was to find true and happy expression.

Mr. Wishart was not so sure about Ford's 'due course.' Would not Nature, in the guise of Romance, assert itself too soon ? Was it not saner and safer to keep young people's sex on one side till its time had come ?

Very likely it would be, Ford agreed, if it could be done ; but he himself would as soon undertake to put babies' heads on one side till they were ready to think with them. Developing sex was the inevitable companion of adolescence in any case ; the only question was how its development would proceed most naturally and

unconsciously. He had no experience, of course ; but his instinct was that free association over all the correlative interests of young life was the natural way.'[1]

Mr. Wishart was inclined to agree with the instinct, but to go cautiously in the matter of its immediate application to practice. If Ford was right, he said, we had to consider people who had got themselves into another of Ford's vicious circles. 'At this rate, it 's not surprising if civilisation 's a bit dizzy,' he remarked parenthetically. If boys and girls ought to be educated so as to develop their main interests in common, then parents who had not been so educated themselves would be very slow to realise the fact. Most people were naturally and perhaps mercifully blind to chances of development that they had lost through deficiencies in their mode of education. And there was prejudice to be considered—the habit that Ford had mentioned of taking separate education for granted. He suggested that Ford should feel his own feet in the matter by degrees, and at the same time avoid alienating the ordinary parent ('it 's those that we have to get,' he said. 'No school is going to live on the enlightened ones alone')—by starting with a boys' school that admitted girls to its youngest class. No one could object nowadays, with boy-and-girl kindergartens

[1] My own experiences of co-educational and of separate schools, and what I know of the experience of others, have convinced me that in actual fact sex-consciousness appears far more readily among boys or girls who are herded apart.

everywhere for precedent ; and then there would be no reason why boys and girls should not go on together to the next class in the usual course ; and if the experiment seemed a success they could let co-education spread upwards through the school. You could reform anything, Mr. Wishart contended, as soon as you could discover a method of reforming it gradually.

Ford, with his inveterate habit of referring everything to fundamentals, owed a great deal to the Scottish practicality that went hand in hand with Mr. Wishart's idealism. Ford could be practical enough when he was faced with practical detail, as was to be shown by his work as a headmaster ; but in tracing the main lines of a project, as in these preliminary discussions, he tended to broaden every issue beyond the practical field. In part it was the natural bias of his essentially philosophical mind ; in part, also, he knew that Mr. Wishart (and, I will dare to say, Miss Wishart as well) liked to see the gates of a subject thrown wide, and that he could rely upon them to draw the light of his generalisations into focus upon the practical issue.

Upon one practical point Ford was firm in applying his philosophical theory of reciprocity. He insisted that the school must pay its way or go under. Mr. Wishart had planned at first for a capital outlay to start the undertaking, with an allowance of income to cover rent and certain other fixed expenses, and a reserve in case of emergencies. Ford would hear of nothing but the initial outlay. Once the school was

established, he said, his business would be to try to make it indispensable for at least as many parents as would suffice to keep it going. In any of the liberal professions financial reward for the work given was a crude and unsatisfactory symbol of reciprocity between the worker and the worked-for, but it was the symbol that found general acceptance. What people would not at present pay for (he restated Ruskin's dictum, with a difference) they ought not at present to have. The work of the school, to carry the moral support of the parents, must rest upon their financial support; one can only carry people along by starting from where they are, not from where one would like them to be, and, roughly, the point from which they are prepared to start is the point at which they are ready to pay the fare. A private subsidy, he was sure, would only tempt him to drift out of the necessary reciprocal touch with the parents by giving, for his own satisfaction, more than they could understand or appreciate.

'But isn't there something rather fine,' Miss Wishart put in, 'about giving people bread when they ask for a stone?'

'Yes—bread,' said Ford. 'But not jam as well—not till they have learned to digest and to demand the bread.'

CHAPTER VIII

A VISITOR to Ford's school was always impressed, favourably or otherwise, by its unpretentiousness. Nothing was on show; nothing expressed insistence upon the scholastic atmosphere. The house in Holland Road gave the impression of being a house before it was a school-house; the rooms were rooms first and class-rooms second. The little community was a household first and foremost, and then a household specialised, but specialised as quietly and unobtrusively as possible, for the business of teaching.

Ford recognised that his refusal to let desks drive out tables and chairs, or maps oust pictures from the walls, made the place look amateurish in the eyes of many parents, even as his system of teaching seemed casual and discursive to any one who did not trouble to realise the broad and systematic plans upon which it was based. His views upon desks and wall-maps were of a piece with his view of education in general. I remember his explaining these views to a conscientious mother who had made something of a study of modern class-room apparatus, and was as much scandalised to see a class sitting on chairs and working at tables as if she had seen the children encouraged to eat Irish

stew with their fingers. Desks, he said, cramped a child into one position. If the desk could be, and was, adjusted to the child's measurements with scientific accuracy, the one position that was allowed for was a right one ; if not, it was a wrong one. But no child could stay in one position, right or wrong, for more than a minute, and the ideal one-position desk required an ideal one-position child not yet invented. With a table and a chair any number of slight changes of position were possible, and a child could be taught, as he ought to be taught, what positions were not good for his bodily well-being, and for what reasons.

Ford's attitude towards this detail of physical education typifies his treatment of mental and moral education. He disliked harness and blinkers for children, believing rather in giving them the opportunity and the means for self-guidance. To his mind, rigid rules of work and of behaviour were as useless—and as ugly—as rigid desks. Other educators have had the same idea, but have substituted slackness for rule. Ford was among the more thoughtful ones who have realised that there is no freedom without self-rule ; and that self-rule has to be taught.

His objection to wall-maps as a permanent schoolroom decoration was precisely the reason for which many teachers like to keep them hung up : that they help children to fix the shape of countries in their minds unconsciously and automatically. Ford considered that a map lies to a child who merely stares

at it: it leads him to think of countries in terms of flat space only, as abstractions without reality. He wanted to teach what a country is and what happens in it before bringing in an abstract diagram of its shape; and to lead up to keen and intelligent map-reading he wanted to teach how lands are explored and surveyed, as well as how they have been formed by Nature.

I am tempted to go on and explain how he linked up stories of exploration with history teaching, surveying with geometry, and physical geography both with world-history and with natural science; Ford's educational system had all its parts so closely interconnected that I cannot touch it at a single point—like this point of the absence of wall-maps—without being drawn into a consideration of the whole. To look under the surface of his method was to see the natural connections between diverse ideas spreading and linking up in every direction. This was why his pupils remembered what they were taught. They had everything else to remember it by. But this was also why his scheme appeared unsystematic to people accustomed to keep ideas in watertight compartments, and to bring out only one at a time. The visitor looked for visible scholastic machinery; and there was none to be seen. The invisible mechanism was the type of mental life by which the school subsisted.

Mr. Wishart, while fully appreciative of Ford's ideal, was concerned from a business point of view at

his disregard for visible evidence of the nature of the school's work. Ford, he said, was hiding his light under a bushel. It seems to me, in retrospect, that the school might have become famous, instead of being appreciated only by an enthusiastic few, if a way could have been found to show more tangible results of what was being done. But no one was inventive enough to suggest exhibits which, while genuinely representing the work of a class, would be obvious and striking enough to impress a visitor ignorant of educational method. Only Ford could have done this, and Ford had no wish to do anything of the kind. He said that he wanted our classes to do their work for its own sake, not in order to impress stupid people. I think he was glad, at the back of his mind, to keep off the kind of parent who is always wanting to 'see results'—to pull the plant up and see how it is growing. His idea of a partnership between school and home in the up-bringing of a child demanded parents who would enter into the school's interests without having the school turned into a show. Certainly the understanding that existed from the first, and grew fuller as time went on, between the school and the keenest of the parents, was a unique and an excellent thing; but many of the parents dropped the attempt to understand Ford's work at a very early stage. It is one thing to teach children to think; it is quite another to induce thought in grown-up people who have firmly established in themselves the habit of avoiding thought. Ford's

system, as it was, was suited to an aristocracy of thoughtful and responsible parents. To have made it democratic he would have had to make concessions—to lower the thought of the school, in some degree, towards the level of thought prevailing in the average home. And Ford would never hear of the 'democratic' view that necessitates levelling down.

The Wisharts had many friends in London whose interest was easily engaged in a scheme for an ideal education. Some of these sent their children to the school, several from a considerable distance; others, in turn, interested their friends, passing on Ford's prospectus and syllabus—a closely-written digest of his scheme of teaching which was an educational eye-opener for those who troubled to read it. The nucleus of the school's clientele—eight families, sending ten children, if I remember rightly—was of Mr. and Miss Wishart's forming. Seven more children, our seven youngest, came from the immediate neighbourhood, where a printed announcement of the school's inception had been circulated by post. Although we had had hopes of starting upon a larger scale than this, Ford was not ill satisfied with a total of seventeen children for the first term. We shared the teaching with a Swiss lady, Mme. Andrée, who had done much work at Neuchâtel in the educational tradition of Pestalozzi and Froebel; besides teaching the small kindergarten class exceedingly well, she held the office of matron, and came

into daily collision, over every conceivable matter of opinion, with the mothers or nurses who convoyed the children to and from the school. Ford, called in as arbitrator in many of these disputes, had his powers of diplomacy severely tested. In addition I, as a novice in the art of teaching, was dependent upon his direction at every turn. Perhaps it was as well that he had not larger numbers to cope with in first encountering the realities of headmastership—though a small community is in some ways more difficult to govern than a large one.

At any rate, the parents of a small school show little compunction in taking up the headmaster's time, and Ford had plenty of opportunity to gauge the main difficulty in establishing a partnership between school and home. There was a local materfamilias, well endowed with that majestic something which is called a presence, whom I will call Mrs. A. Besides a presence, she had the voice and articulation of one whose mind is made up on all points, and her statements to Ford were for all the world to hear.

She began by expressing the hope that he had a strong personality. A strong personality, she assured him, was essential for a schoolmaster. Ford said that he hoped to develop some signs of personality in the children. 'Children have *no* personality,' said Mrs. A. (I was thankful that Mme. Andrée was not present to pour a torrent of wrath upon this flat negation of Froebel's chief principle.) Ford suggested that perhaps it was the fault of their upbringing if they had not.

But Mrs. A. had disposed of that subject, and now wished to let Ford know that her boy, then aged six, would in time have to make his own way in the world. Ford remarked that if the child were learning to think during the next few years he would be doing as well for his future career as possible.

'There 's altogether too much thinking,' said Mrs. A. (whom I hope my memory reports with fair accuracy—nothing but direct statement can suggest the decision of her pronouncement.) 'When it 's a question of a scholarship or a place in some business, the thing will be, What does he *know*?' Having thus settled that point, she told Ford that the boy had enough play at home, and that she expected him to work at school; that he was very naughty at home, and was being sent to school to learn discipline; and that he was one of those children that can be led, but cannot be driven.

Mrs. A. proved quite immune to Ford's idea of parental co-operation, but she became a staunch supporter of the school as she noted the results in her own boy's case of a method of teaching which she consistently fought at each successive point. But having issued her instructions she paid little more attention to Ford that term, preferring a good honest nose-to-nose argument with Mme. Andrée over every detail of Froebel's system of educative play. Both ladies said their say, often simultaneously, and were satisfied; and meanwhile the education of Jack A. proceeded, to their equal contentment.

As representing another type of parent equally inaccessible to Ford's co-operation ideal, I have a fairly distinct recollection of a mother who may be called Mrs. B. She stood in awe of Ford from the first, overpowered by her recognition of something in him which she inadequately described as his 'cleverness.' She came to me as to a less luminous body—shining with the milder, reflected light—and said that she was sure Mr. Ford was a wonderfully clever teacher, but that she did hope he had a strong personality. (The opening was already familiar to me; it is one of the two principal remarks by which the teaching profession recognises the inept parent.) She was afraid that her little boy had rather a weak nature. He was so easily led into mischief by older children. (Charlie B. proved to be an original-minded young monkey who never joined a group, whether for good or for mischievous fun, without leading it.) He needed, she said, a strong hand over him, to influence him in the right direction. I had sufficiently absorbed Ford's principles to offer a tentative suggestion that perhaps the child needed to be taught how to keep a controlling hand upon himself. Mrs. B. feared that he was of too weak a nature ever to learn this. She placed implicit confidence in Mr. Ford. If only his personality was strong enough to overcome the weakness of her boy's character. . . . She broke off, leaving me to imagine what the intensity of her gratitude would be. But she recovered herself to add that Charlie was one of

those children who can be led but cannot be driven.

When I reported my interview with Mrs. B. to Ford, he said at once that he had little hope of her from the co-operative point of view. She was the kind of person, he said, who offers nothing—not even what there is to offer—and quietly, humbly, expects everything. None the less, Mrs. B. proved a 'good' parent, from the school's point of view. She at least sent us her two younger children as soon as each was old enough. But she never knew what was done with them. Her enthusiasm for Ford's scheme rested upon a blind devotion.

I remember Ford alluding, two or three times in the course of that first term, to the two catch phrases that ring so inevitably upon a teacher's ear. 'These people have got hold of the right end of the stick at last,' he once said. 'No child can be driven, effectually; leading is the only way.' But they got no further, as he put it on another occasion, than the very tip of the stick's right end. They would make it out that the stick itself was the good old-fashioned 'rod' of our forefathers in a new incarnation—that for coercion by beating we could only substitute coercion by a mysterious thing called personality, in its essence a kind of hypnotism. This, Ford maintained, was a step downward, not upward, from the 'rod.' The dominance of the thick stick at least left a child free to rebel in secret; the dominance of a personality invaded

even the secret recesses of his soul, and left him no freedom at all. 'They 've got the right end of the wrong stick, in fact,' he concluded. Leading, not driving, was the right way for education; but it must not be a leading of the blindfolded. It would give a better idea of the teacher's business, Ford thought, to say not that he has to lead the way, but that he has to point the way. Children have to be taught to see clearly what the pointing finger indicates; but to reach the spot indicated they must not be led there in blindness, but encouraged to see and feel their way to it, and to strengthen their mental and spiritual sinews by a struggle of their own to climb to the ideal that has been made clear to them.

'Only we 've got to be jolly sure,' Ford added, 'that we don't point to anything quite out of their reach. Then they fall backwards and get disheartened.'

The seventeen children were taught in two classes, of which the higher was subdivided again for certain subjects. Their ages ranged from six to twelve; a few boys of thirteen and fourteen would have been sent to us, but Ford had decided to take none over twelve to begin with, intending to build up the middle and upper forms of the school chiefly of those who should rise, properly grounded in the elements of his system, from the lower. It was not only that he wanted to make sure in this way that a coherent sequence of method should eventually run through the school; he also hoped for the support of parents

who would have seen the point of his method in the earlier stages, and would realise that he knew what he was about when it came to the later stages.

The kindergarten opened as a little group of four boys and three girls, all in their sixth or seventh year; new arrivals, dropping in casually during the term, increased the number to a dozen. Here Mme. Andrée taught with the practised patience and suavity which she reserved for her dealings with children, clamouring to Ford every now and again for the apparatus prescribed by the Froebel Society. Ford, who always held that no teacher should be more dependent upon ready-made apparatus than was absolutely necessary, encouraged her to invent, and to get her children to invent, every kind of home-made substitute for the Froebel 'gifts,' thus logically carrying on Froebel's own principle of drawing out the originative activity of children.

He took the kindergarten himself for a daily lesson known as 'Questions,' which consisted nominally in his explaining in turn as many problems as the children had time to propound to him, but really in his showing them how to hunt down the answers for themselves with as little help as possible. He always allowed three questions from the same child upon the same subject, provided they could be put in the form of What? How? and Why?—in that order. What, Jack A. would ask, were the men doing in the road outside? Evidence was forthcoming from the different

observations of the children who had watched them: they were laying gas-pipes; and there followed attempts on the children's part to explain what coal-gas is. (Ford, of course, gave no scientific explanation at this stage—that would come years later—but only encouraged description and definition of what the children had observed.) Next, how was gas made? Jack A. had to rest content, in the present stage of his understanding, with an elementary and partial examination of this query; but more could be said about the way in which gas is distributed to houses. There was a pause: the questioner did not want to waste the last of his three opportunities to lead the quest. Then —'Why can't you see the gas when it isn't alight?'

Ford lit a cigarette (not, by the way, his usual practice in school hours) and, blowing a puff of smoke round the gas-jet, turned it on. 'You can, now,' he said, as the escaping gas swept the smoke upwards. 'Can't you?' The class assented, all but Jack, who was keen to push his question home. 'No, you can't—you only see the smoke go up!' he said, and blushed with pride when Ford told him that he was quite right —and that he would not be able to understand why you can see through some things, and cannot see other things at all, until he had learned a great deal more about the what and the how of things.

This elementary foundation-laying for an orderly habit of thought was by no means directed towards satisfying the young and inquiring mind upon all

points ; its immediate lesson was, rather, that there is only a partial answer to most questions, and that the completer answer needs more knowledge and more practice in thinking. Visitors who came in to hear Ford give a lesson often thought him 'inconclusive,' when his aim was to make children begin to realise that all knowledge is inconclusive, and would lose its eternal attraction if it were not. His later work with older children always had the same quality, and gave the same sense that the class was a single organism reaching out, grasping and holding what it was able to grasp, but always with an eager eye upon something beyond, not yet grasped, but presently to be seized upon and made a handhold in the further climb among the mountain ridge of knowledge.

No marks or prizes were given in Ford's school. They would have seemed irrelevant. Regarded as concrete recognition of a child's advance, they would have meant little to children who thought less of the small things that they had done than of the splendid things that they wanted to do ; regarded as a stimulus to competition they would have meant nothing to children who never thought about beating each other, but only about beating themselves.

Among the ten children, that first term, who were above the kindergarten age—our Form I., divided for the two more formal subjects of grammar and mathematics into Forms I*a* and I*b*—there was no idea of precedence from the start. I*a* gave itself no airs

because it knew an intransitive from a copulative verb or could solve a problem in simple proportion; somebody in I*b* was always likely to redress the balance when the two divisions united into a homogeneous Form I. for history or composition. The essence of the matter is that Ford studied to bring out the something unique and irreplaceable that exists in every individual child. His children learned to respect this something in one another; and they learned self-respect by the same process.

This is a biography of Ford, not a treatise upon his educational method, but a few notes upon that method are essential because his teaching was, at this period, by far the greater part of his life. The time-table of our little Form I. really gives the whole of his system in embryo. When Forms II., III., IV., and V. came into being as time went on, their time-tables were essentially the same, only the parts of Ford's system had budded and branched into an increasing diversity of connected 'subjects.' The day began with a scripture lesson. Ford regarded the Bible as a history—the history of a people, viewed from the single standpoint of goodness. He taught that in the Bible you find everything tested by the question, Is it right?—a question often asked crudely and answered clumsily, but always insistently asked. As he taught it, the Bible was the story of the development of a sense of right. With this main line of thought he connected every kind of incident and illustration from history and from everyday life with

which the children were familiar. He taught no creed, considering this to be the business of parents and priests; but he taught simply and clearly what is and has been believed by different people, and what good has come of their beliefs. Later, with older children, he explained other beliefs as well as those of the Bible. He did not so much 'teach a religion' as bring out the connection of all religion with thought and life, and its influence for good or evil according as it is nobly or degradedly conceived.

The next lesson on the morning list was grammar. Ford taught the structure of language as a single science, beginning with the structure of English, then comparing English with French, and connecting both, later on, with the more exact structure of Latin. He wasted no time in having the same laws of language taught separately and under different names as English, French, and Latin grammar; and as regards differences of structure between languages he avoided the endless mistakes that children make through confusing the rules of one language with those of another by setting out these differences of rule parallel to one another, as it were, in the children's minds. He used no text-books, but taught children how to reconstruct the rules of grammar for themselves by analysing passages that had been read beforehand—often passages that had been read in other lessons. He made grammar interesting, first, because he used the fact that children always like to pick things to pieces and see how they

are made, and second, because he chose passages that were interesting or beautiful in themselves, and showed how their quality depended upon their structure.

Mathematics he taught as one science from the first, and throughout the later development of the school. To teach arithmetic, geometry, and algebra in separate lessons was in his view as wasteful of time, and as misleading, as to teach the structures of different languages separately. And here again he continually drew material from other lessons. The 'made-up' problem—such as the useless ascertainment of the number of days in which A can do an unspecified piece of work—had no place in his teaching. Actual material for problem work was drawn from the facts and figures of the geography and natural science lessons and from doings in real life with which the children had some acquaintance; and they learned to state their problems for themselves as well as to solve them. Problem work was his foundation for mathematical teaching: practical mathematics came before theoretical. At any rate he was so far justified that his older pupils eventually showed greater keenness for pure mathematics, and better sense in the handling of theory, than is often found in the rank and file of advanced mathematical students.

After the Swedish drill and mid-morning break that came after the mathematical lesson, there followed a period devoted to history and geography. Ford did

not merge the two subjects entirely into one, but he taught them in very close connection with one another. He thought it absurd to talk about the activities of man without constant relation to the environment of man; and, since he taught the detailed history of individual nations only within a general framework of world-history, he naturally referred at every turn to that historical geography which explains many of man's opportunities and vicissitudes upon this planet. The aspect of geography which is really a branch of physical science he kept in connection with the work done in the science lessons; the mathematics of geography, as we have seen, were carried forward to be worked out in the mathematical lesson. The biographical and literary sides of history were connected with the lessons in literature and composition next to be noted. The aspects of history which relate to modern civics and politics came into touch with another lesson to be described later on.

The literature and composition period—the last in the morning's time-table—was concerned primarily with the art of language, as the grammar period was primarily concerned with the science of language. Here the children studied models of language rightly and artistically used, English, French, and, at a later stage, Latin, and practised their immature style by endeavouring to summarise, restate or imitate the written word of masters in the literary craft. Ford chose his models both for their intrinsic literary value

and for their relation to any of the other lessons that the Form was learning at the time. The great historians, the great scientists, the great statesmen were called in evidence of his teachings in history, science or politics, as well as the great poets in prose or verse, the perfection of whose phrasing was later to be put under the grammatical microscope. The children's own compositions, however, were not only in reproduction or imitation of models ; Ford cared more than anything to develop originality. But the original essays written in this lesson were usually written around material or ideas derived from other lessons : one essay would be about a character lately studied in history, another upon the literary or poetic aspect of some fact of natural science, a third upon a problem of everyday life that had been brought out in the last lesson in civics. The literature lesson, more than any (unless it were the scripture lesson), brought all Ford's teaching into a common, human focus.

(I am necessarily straying far beyond the scope of our first term's work, and of the childish limitations of Form I., in this attempt at a crude summary of Ford's time-table. But there is scarcely a point of method that I have indicated—though the statement may seem surprising—which Ford did not apply during that first term, in simple and elementary ways, to the actual and effective teaching of Form I., a Form of ten and eleven-year olds. It was part of Ford's genius as a teacher to be able to present large schemes in

embryonic shape, and to bring the germs of mature ideas into touch with immature minds.)

The afternoon time-table varied more for the different days of the week. The first period, a comfortably lengthy one, was given on two days to natural science, largely experimental, on two to drawing and painting, and on two to handwork of various kinds. On the two latter afternoons there were games—a field had been taken west of Shepherd's Bush. Ford was never a good player of games—he never had enough practice—but he was an excellent coach. On the other four days Form I. went on to French reading and conversation with Mme. Andrée, while Ford took the kindergarten in 'Questions.' There followed lessons in reading aloud, recitation or acting—incidents drawn from history or other studies being often dramatised by the children; and Miss Wishart came in to give a bi-weekly singing lesson with Ford's assistance.

A volume might be written about Ford's teaching of science. The principal thing and the simplest thing to be said about it is that he taught science as a whole and as an outlook upon life.[1] Form I. began with elementary nature study, connected with the arithmetic, geography, and drawing lessons—and to

[1] I have outlined an adaptation of the scheme, omitting many features that could not be adopted in most schools without a revolution in method, in an article entitled 'School Science: the Synthetic Method,' which appeared in *The Times Educational Supplement* of 3rd December 1912, and was the subject of a leading article in *The Times* of the same date.

mention these connections is to make it clear that 'nature study,' in Ford's hands, was not only the study of seedlings and tadpoles. I will take a single instance from a time when Form II. had come into being, a few terms later on. The children's lessons in world-geography had reached a stage in which the formation of land and the wearing-down of rock into soil had been discussed, and different types of country-side and their vegetable products were being considered. Ford and I wrote to friends in different parts of England and obtained samples of different types of soil. These went to the laboratory, where the children of Form II., working in pairs, and each pair analysing one sample, proceeded to separate and weigh the constituents of the different soils—clay, sand, lime, organic matter, and so forth—and to note down in what quantity each constituent was present.

The notes from this lesson were used as material for the next mathematical lesson. Form II. was then at work upon proportion and percentages, and to work out and table the percentage composition of the different soils was an appropriate exercise. In the next science lesson the remainder of each sample was put into an earthenware pan, and each pan was sown with the same number of the same typical seeds; thereafter, the pans of soil were given strictly equal treatment in the matter of moisture, warmth and light; the seedlings were then measured at intervals and drawn (of course in the drawing lesson) to show how

each appeared to like its quarters. Finally, all the records and notes were brought together in a composition lesson, and the members of Form II. wrote up their account of the whole proceeding.

This is a particularly plain and obvious example of Ford's method in teaching elementary science. Its defect as an instance is that it is too simple ; most of the illustrations of his procedure that could be cited would give a much fuller idea of the meaning that science had for him and for those whom he taught. But to follow any of the threads that were more intricately woven into the fabric of his teaching, would be to make his teaching the sole theme for the remainder of this book ; if I pull at any really important thread of thought in his educational system, it is to find that half a dozen other threads follow, and that these in turn are followed by a score of fresh filaments, all essential to the texture. If I were to touch, for further instance, upon his treatment of the much-laboured topic of flower-fertilisation as a study conducive to eugenic realisations, I should be compelled to disentangle at great length all the slight, fugitive, but carefully thought-out and interrelated tendencies in his teaching towards a rational outlook upon the subject of sex. Whether Ford was explaining, with careful frankness, some crude phrase in the Old Testament, or touching upon the moral of Greek and Roman decadence, or describing the pollination of flowers, he had an ultimate aim in mind ; and towards this all

his gradual allusions converged. He wanted to lead children towards a right and a natural understanding of sex—not to a mere acquaintance, often dangerous by itself, with natural facts, but to an understanding that would gradually put fact into its proper relation with feeling, and lead the later emotions of adolescence outward, not inward—into the world of ideals and of the creative imagination, not into the sensuous imaginings of constrained, inward-looking youth. But this, though only a single point of Ford's scientific method in its wider aspect, is one that concerns his educational methodology rather than his biography.

It is time to turn from Ford's system regarded as a training for the mind, and to speak of its relation to the training of will and character—not that the two aspects can be separated, except as a matter of convenience in description. It was an essential point in Ford's theory of education that all training is character-training, either good or bad, and that the teaching which isolates mind-training during any part of the school day is not merely neglecting the character during that time but actively spoiling it. This is not to say that he was continually harping upon morals. He believed in leading children to seek the truth of things for its own sake—in developing their intellectual conscience; and he believed that this conscience is destroyed by any teaching that is merely a mental gymnastic and nothing more.

I remember his stating this view to me in some such

terms as these : It is part of our business in education to aim at making the world as we see it more like the world as we think it ought to be. There are two obvious defects in the world as we see it : ignorance, and unreadiness to apply what knowledge there is. The remedy for the first is a wider spread of knowledge, and this is often thought to be the only province of education. But it is of no use to spread knowledge which will only be vitiated by the second defect. People who know what to do and are not doing it have a sore spot in their under-consciousness—a region of fundamental insincerity and uneasiness.

Take the case of the slums, he said. We all know enough by now to have made sure that slums ought to be abolished, not only as a matter of human decency, but as a matter of social health and prosperity. But we don't get it done. Ask any individual why this is, and the answer will be that we can't see how to set about it. But it is the will, not the way, that is really wanting—or rather the turning of the will into an effective channel. Every one cares about abolishing poverty except a minority of profiteering ruffians who care about nothing but making money ; and even these have begun to see, from the purely commercial point of view, that the poverty and ill-health of employees is a drag upon business. The trouble is that we keep our knowledge and our pity and even our commercial wisdom in one pocket, and our will in another. We have never had any real practice in

keeping our knowledge and our will in touch with one another. And when it comes to action—such as fixing a rate of wages, or running up a new block of tenements in Bermondsey—sheer, blind inertia keeps us as close to the bad old way as possible. Both public opinion and the law are far ahead of our practice ; but sweating goes on, and surveyors are still squared to pass evasions of the building regulations.

Ford's working out of this instance was typical of his method in two ways. He saw the direction of social evolution as depending, always, upon the direction in which the pressure of individual wills was turned. In the case of poverty and slum life, the pressure that kept them in existence was blind. The more enlightened will—which exists all right, he maintained—was unable to function because it existed only in the air, and had never been taught its business ; and the blind, primitive will had its way. When this state of things was allowed to go on for long enough, revolution supervened in a healthy society, or decay in an unhealthy one. Revolution was the desperate cure for evolution that had taken a downward curve. The only other cure was to enable the enlightened will of man to exercise its natural upward pressure—to harness the balloon to the car, as Ford put it. Unharnessed, the most enlightened exponents of social theory were only drifting gas-bags. This idea of a detached and useless enlightenment was fundamental to Ford's explanation of our failure to live up to our ideals.

This explanation was the first typical point in his treatment of the slum instance; it related the particular problem to a wide general tendency. The second stage was to work out the particular means for dealing with the tendency. Ford was not one of the educators who think that education is the only reforming power in the world; rather, he saw it as one mode of expression for the general will to reform; but the particular 'harness' by which he had chosen to contribute his own share of reforming pressure was the machinery of school-work, and he believed that that machinery could do something to make enlightened goodwill more effectual in life than it usually is. The cry, 'The evil that I would not, that I do,' he declared to be the cry of the miseducated through the ages, most naturally voiced by Paul the convert to Christianity, who in his youth had been brought up a Pharisee.

Ford was convinced that no teaching could be effectual for the future which did not enable a child to exert and to express his own will at every turn. All the great educational prophets, and Froebel the most notably of them all, have insisted upon the need of enlisting a child's will on behalf of learning; Ford, I believe, was the only practitioner in education who clearly worked out the further need of developing a child's will not only that he may learn the better, but in order that what he learns may have effect in his after life. This of course is an aim, an ideal, of all

good educators; but I have heard of none but Ford whose method gave systematic expression to the aim.

To begin with, he taught children, as do all good teachers, to have a philosophy of their own; he led them to think over and discuss the root principles of every topic that came up for consideration in school, so far as they could work them out. Even the kindergarten, in 'Questions,' learned to formulate its simple little conclusions. He gave the fullest scope and help to the natural keenness of children to get as near to the absolute truth of everything as they can, and he encouraged both their will to discover truth and their ambition to excel themselves, by leading them to realise how partial and imperfect was the truth that they had so far discovered—and how infinitely wide a field still lay open, even before the wisest, for further discovery. But he did not stop at thus eliciting principles from fact. He never carried theory into the upper air of philosophy and left it there. He always brought the principle back to earth again and applied it to the facts and problems of everyday life. Thus, as his youngest pupils began by learning to use the sequence of questions, What?—How?—Why? as the natural order of inquiry when one is in pursuit of knowledge, so, as they grew older, they learned to use the sequence, Knowledge—Principle—Application. They were encouraged in their natural tendency to keep these three elements distinct and in their proper order: they had first to get at all the available facts and arrange

them in true relation to one another; then, and only then, to begin talking about the principle governing the relations between the group of facts; and lastly, to apply the principle to some practical problem—if possible, a problem concerning their own everyday life, and, if possible, a problem which they could solve in action, not only in theory.

Thus Ford aimed at building up a habit of mind through which will can function: the sound habit of a mind that, first, will not rest content till it has all the available facts marshalled and arranged without partiality; second, will not look at the facts alone, but will insist upon looking through them to discover a principle: third, having found a principle, will not remain content with that satisfaction, but will be uneasy until it has found a right application for the principle.

This is somewhat theoretical; let me give an example of the working of the plan in elementary school-room practice. I will choose one from my own work upon Ford's model, to show how far his plan was workable under a 'prentice hand. Form III. was considering the government of Greek city-states in the course of their study of elementary world-history. (This was before a Fourth Form had come into being, and eighteen months or so after the school had started; the average age of Form III. was about thirteen.) We had collected the facts about Greek city-state government, chiefly from Mr. Warde Fowler's book on the

subject, in relation to the small and manageable numbers which the states had to deal with, to the Greek education and love of clear thinking, and to the fact that slavery was part of the Greek social order. Then came the search for simple principles.

Slavery, at any rate, was wrong ; that point had been worked out in an earlier history lesson. But what of the comparatively humane slavery practised by the Greeks ? A child suggested that this was better than a cruel slavery, but not as good as freedom for everybody. Wasn't a humanely treated slave better off than a badly treated freeman ? Some one gained kudos by observing that the masters could be just as slack whether the slaves were well treated or not. Slavery, in fact, led to ' slackness '—almost the last word in childish condemnation—in any case, and slackness meant the deterioration of a people. Slavery was bad, but Greek slavery was not as bad as it might have been because other things were good. Greek education was good ; every one thought it worth while to know things and to think about them, so every one could help a bit in thinking for the good of the city. But also every one could help because there were few enough people for any one to be heard who had something important to say. It was because of good education that other people would be ready to listen ; but also there must be few enough of them for all to hear. The special principle seemed to be, then, that small groups of people could govern themselves better

than big groups. Large nations—in those times at any rate—had to be governed from behind their backs by autocrats. This crude and simple conclusion was subtle enough for the children at that stage; later on it would be carried further.

Next came the search for an application. Do small groups govern themselves nowadays, in England? The first answer was No: we are all governed by Parliament. But weren't there small groups within the nation? The children could know little as yet about our muddle-headed attempts at local self-government, but one suggestion was forthcoming: parishes. Was parish life much like city-state life? Not much, apparently. We arrived at the conclusion that the chief business of a parish was to look after the poor, and that it was a good plan for small groups of people to look after their own poor—the circumstances would be better understood. But who pays attention to what the parish is doing? The children did not know, but they decided that every one ought to.

At this moment an idea occurred to one of the children. The different things that were made in the handwork classes of the school were sold twice in the year—admiring parents, relations, and friends of the manufacturers were the buyers, but Ford saw to it that the goods were worth their price—for the benefit of Dr. Barnardo's Homes. Wouldn't it be better—this was the idea—if we paid some attention to the doings of our own parish by devoting the profits of the

school sales of work to parochial charity? The rest of Form III. was somewhat scandalised. Dr. Barnardo's was regarded as a school institution; we took pride in the occasional reports that were sent to us of the progress of waifs sent out to Canada through our munificence. What was mere parochialism compared with this? Parochialism, however, gained some ground in later discussion, after school; and at the next history lesson there was a brief question time before entering upon the main business of the House, and it was agreed that the problem of local as against centralised charity should be referred to Ford.

Ford discussed the matter in all due solemnity with the members of Form III. and their history master, who together formed a deputation after morning school. He pointed out that the parochialists of Form III. were quite right—one ought to help in local affairs; but that the others were quite right too—one must not neglect the wider issues, in a big nation like this. He suggested that the school workshop should divide the income from its produce between Dr. Barnardo's and some local charity; and from that time forward this was the arrangement, to the mutual satisfaction of every one concerned. (Ford, I happen to know, not wishing Dr. Barnardo's Homes to suffer by losing the half of a school subscription, made up the deficit himself, but of this the children in Form III. knew nothing.)

This application, by the children themselves, of a

principle drawn from facts long centuries distant, was perhaps far-fetched; it was only natural that it should be. But it would be difficult to deny that in attempting, however childishly, to apply the principle of interest in local affairs to their own time and place, they gained a better realisation of the human meaning of a city-state; or that their potential value as English citizens was developed by their childish effort to revalue the lesson of ancient Greece. It is easier to laugh at the solemnities of childish idealism than to train that idealism, in its natural, crude spontaneity, so that it may eventually bear fruit in the world of realities. But it is very greatly worth while to watch the early genesis of a child's impulse towards social goodwill, and to try to help a little in enabling the impulse to grow towards its maturer expression.

Ford was equally keen on small beginnings in the details of character-training, and on small beginnings that should be positive, not negative. He believed that faults of character are both magnified and ingrained by perpetual 'don't's.' Lying, for instance, attains the dignity of a crime for many children; and since few people try to understand the psychology of a childish lie, often an inevitable reflex action due to the clumsiness of grown-up questioning, the criminal charge is often a thing of pure unreason to a child. The deliberate lie, on the other hand, often goes undetected. Small wonder that many children come

to regard lying as a game of chance! Ford always explained to a child that any fool can tell a lie; it is the easy, unenterprising thing to do—mere 'slackness.' The clever thing, he would point out, is to tell the truth so as to make oneself understood; any one can tell a lie so as to be believed at the moment.

But a child seldom lied to Ford. The defensive lie, perhaps the commonest agent in undermining the childish sense of truth, was hardly ever set up against him. While he encouraged children to try to make themselves understood, he did his part by being ready to understand. I remember his saying that a child lies in self-defence for two reasons: he has done something wrong, and knows it, and his civilised self, which has now recovered control, resents being identified with the more primitive self which committed the blunder; also, there is allied to his revulsion from the wrong-doing self a sense of impending calamity—of grown-up reprobation all ready to overwhelm both his selves in a common retribution. In this distorted moment, the truth about the misdemeanour becomes the lever that, if touched, would let loose the flood; and fear of grown-up misunderstanding makes the civilised self of the child cower down with his primitive self under the easy protection of a lie. The fear is not in its essence a fear of punishment, Ford insisted, though this is often linked with it; it is a fear of opprobrium, largely blind and instinctive. Vestiges of the same vague, subconscious fear occasionally make

grown-up people tell small purposeless lies without being aware of them until the words are spoken.

A great part of Ford's secret as a successful trainer of character was that he had found out how to ally himself with the higher will of a child against the lower. In this particular case of the defensive lie, the child who came to Ford with some misdemeanour upon his conscience, knew that his more civilised self, already in revolt against the tyranny of the primitive criminal in him, would find a friend ready to help and explain. It was easy to tell the truth to Ford, because he would see it as the truth and as a thing to be reasoned about, not as an abhorrent evil to be made a text for moral reprobation. The keynote of Ford's attitude towards the young misdemeanant was always, 'Let 's see how we can put this right.' The consequence of wrong-doing was not punishment, but an attempt at reparation, and though the reparation might be difficult, it was willingly undertaken when it was decreed by Ford.

This was not the result of Ford's personal influence —of his 'strong personality,' in the common parental phrase—it was the result of his having taken trouble to study the nature of children, and to gain their trust by gradual degrees through showing that he wanted to understand them, not to condemn. In the particular instance of defensive lying, he made the lie impossible, because he had developed a method to that end. He once gave me some hints on the subject. Above all things, he said, one must keep quiet and

deliberate. Any sign of fuss or irritation raises the child's primitive fear of opprobrium. Go slowly: take time to think; you will need it yourself, and also the child needs the opportunity to think before he speaks, so that he may not commit himself rashly to a sudden untruth. Also—here Ford was emphatic—look out for the signs that a hasty lie is coming: the drop of the eyes, the catch of the breath that tell of mistrust and of a sudden resolution to risk the defensive fiction. That is the moment to interrupt and to talk quietly and reasoningly. The actual utterance of the untruth must be warded off: once it is uttered, pride will come in to prevent its withdrawal.

At this point I asked whether the catch of the breath might not equally indicate a sudden resolution on the child's part to tell the truth—to make a clean breast of it. Ford was illuminating—as he always was upon a matter of practical detail, no less than of general theory. 'Watch his eyes,' he said. If a child looks down at the outset, he is going to lie, though he may look up at you again, when the untruth is prepared, with an appearance of the most engaging simplicity. The child who is going to tell the truth looks up first, if only for a moment: he may gaze at his boots afterwards as he stammers out his halting explanations, but the one preliminary glance upwards has declared his sincerity. I must say that I have never known this test to fail.

To speak more generally of Ford's scheme of char-

acter-training, he believed strongly in making children conscious of the primitive barbarian that still lurks in civilised humanity, as well as of their higher nature that has to master the barbarian element. He believed that most moral training is lopsided—it dwells upon ideals and rules of conduct without explaining to a child the difficulties in his own nature that he will have to encounter in applying them. The natural, healthy barbarian in a child is usually treated upon the principle of letting sleeping dogs lie: though some outlet, merely physical as a rule, is allowed for the exercise of 'animal spirits,' in order that these may remain temporarily quiescent in the times between. The fact that the ethics of primitive man—'a scratching, yelling, grabbing, envying individualist,' as Ford once described him—are only partially submerged in childhood, is a fact of human natural history which he refused to neglect in the training of character. The usual way, he said, is blindly to suppress the barbarian spirit—to express oneself, often quite insincerely, as shocked and horrified whenever it emerges, and hastily to push it under again by a show of moral indignation; and this is as great a mistake as blindly to allow it free play.

Ford drew from his own short experience as a schoolboy, as well as from his keen and intuitive observation of children, a truth which most of us can verify from our recollections of childhood, and perhaps in some degree from our adult experience:

that children, and in some degree grown-ups as well, have an uneasy sense at the back of their mind of being the most appalling moral humbugs in relation to the superior moral standards of those around them. This, Ford was sure, is altogether a bad thing. It leads either to morbidities of conscience, the child regarding himself as a hopeless sinner, or, in children of more robust nature, to the determined crushing-under of a conscience that has become so pessimistic a companion. In the one case the result is hypertrophy, in the other atrophy, of conscience.

His method of avoiding both evils was to teach the facts of our mixed inheritance, in connection both with world-history and with simple evolutionary science. These are big words when one thinks of small children, but Ford proved that the teaching could be effectual through the stories of human and animal life that were the small beginnings for a knowledge of history and of evolution. He developed in children a consciousness of the barbarian in themselves, not as a mysterious and an almost obscene monster to be shamefacedly suppressed, but as a cousin of the cave-dweller and the ape, a creature that needed to be trained and taught its manners so that it might become fit for civilised society. But he made this consciousness outward-looking; he had no desire to train up introspective children. When he was talking about the character of an Israelite or a Norman king, he would speak of it in terms of the man's mixed nature, and of

his success or failure in controlling or being dominated by his under-self. He led children at every turn, by methods simple or more mature according to their stage of development, to look out upon the whole phenomenon of character and conduct as a question of the relation between the higher and the more primitive natures of man.

This part of Ford's method in character training relates only to one point in that important and little-studied art; but it was the point upon which he laid most stress in discussing method with us who taught in the school—with Mme. Andrée and myself in the first instance, and later with his larger staff. He believed that systematic handling of the main natural difficulty in training character had always been unduly neglected in education, and that a confusion between morals and natural history has always been a bar to clear-headed teaching. But he was far from making natural history explain morals out of existence; rather, he strengthened morals by bringing them into connection with reason. The moral responsibility of his children was the more absolute because they knew better than most children what self-control ought to mean.

Besides this self-control of the individual, there was the question of the individual child's obedience to the control of the teacher, and of the necessary laws of the school community. Here Ford made application of principles that are well known to the comparatively few who study the work and the teachings of the great

educators of the past. He believed in education through freedom, and for freedom, but he knew that the only real liberty is social liberty—the harmony of freedom with obedience that comes of an understanding consent to the control of a reasonable law.[1] Ford's chief contribution to method for education in freedom was to insist upon the development by teachers of something which he called 'the technique of praise.' Our guiding principle, he said, was that a thing well done and spontaneously was of far greater educational value than a thing well done under constraint. Constraint was necessary in so far as one had not yet secured the spontaneity; but it was a second-best—a confession of weakness. And constraint ultimately rested upon punishments. A punishment was, as it were, a push from behind. Quite an elaborate technique of punishment had been worked out by the teaching profession—all of it unsatisfactory, because punishment is in itself an unsatisfactory method. But if we disliked, as all teachers dislike, this clumsy and unsatisfactory push from behind, why had we not developed a method of pulling from the front?

A member of the staff (I am quoting from my recollection of a staff meeting) complained that Ford had done away with the means to that end—marks and prizes. Ford explained once more his view that there is a special faculty for accumulating marks, passing

[1] I have dealt with the historical development of this idea in *The Permanent Values in Education.* (Constable, 1917.)

examinations and winning prizes, which has very little relation to the genuine educational values. Those who achieve academic success are seldom those who make a success of life. One cannot measure a child's quality in the quantitative, numerical language of marks; and in trying to do so, one actually measures something akin to, but different from, the faculty for amassing money—some talent for gathering and hoarding, in its essence a form of greed. This is not the right incentive to learning; it is an ulterior motive; and, worse, a wrong ulterior motive.

The real motive for aspiring to wisdom and goodness, Ford proceeded to urge, is, simply, wisdom and goodness for their own sake; but children do need some test of their own advance—some recognition from outside to reassure their own inner consciousness that their reasonable self-approbation when they have done well is not misplaced. Marks are a clumsy and an ineffectual form of recognition. They put a premium upon the facile, shallow, easily adaptable mind. And there is an older, a more natural and fundamental reaching-out of the childish consciousness for recognition of childish effort: the sane and simple desire of childhood for praise when praise is due. Ford warmed to his subject. How far, he asked us (I paraphrase his words, of course), do we try to make our praise expressive and effectual? Our encouragement of a child's efforts, when we can see them to be sincere and painstaking, ought always to be articulate and inspiring.

The hope of our discriminating praise ought to be a far stronger incentive for a child than the fear of our clumsy punishments. If we could only learn to praise rightly, Ford concluded, there might be a hope that punishments would become altogether unnecessary. The need for the clumsy push from behind, in fact, might vanish, if only the pull from before were made effectual.

Eventually, Ford practically abolished punishments from the school. He made it a rule that every case of insubordination, idleness, or other cause of reprobation should be referred directly to himself; and when he had talked over the difficulty with the child who was at fault there was seldom any need for punitive retribution. Generally there was at the root of the trouble some misunderstanding between the child and the teacher; certainly this was always the case with any child whom I myself 'sent up.' Ford could always see that I had made a mistake somewhere, and could tell me what was wrong; usually I had failed to make the child see what he should be aiming at, and had stupidly tried to exercise the blind 'push from behind.' In so far as the child, too, had been in the wrong, Ford brought into play his customary principle of exacting, not retribution, but reparation; and I often had a recalcitrant pupil return from his talk with Ford full of apologies and promises of amendment. The apologies, by the time Ford had done with the two of us, were usually mutual.

I had known Ford, and had learned to trust him, through many years. Some of my colleagues, in the later development of the school, did not know him, and could not trust him when it came to maintenance of a child's rights and dignities against their own. This was one of the reasons for the failure of as hopeful an educational experiment as has ever been made in England.

CHAPTER IX

It has been said, and with a certain amount of truth, that a headmaster can keep on good terms with his school or with his staff, but not with both. Ford's staff approved of his methods of teaching and worked hard to apply them, but there was something in his wider attitude towards education that seemed inevitably to rouse a certain kind of mistrust. Put in simple terms, the feeling was that his system as a whole would make children too good to live. Different forms of this fundamental misgiving were continually cropping up at staff meetings, in relation to one detail after another of educational practice. I do not want, in this matter, to indulge in retrospective criticism of those who were my colleagues in the carrying out of Ford's work; the principle underlying their uneasiness was sincerely held, and patiently discussed with Ford in all its protean shapes.

It would be a somewhat technical business to make this deeply rooted difference of opinion clear by tracing its subtle influence through a description of a typical staff-meeting discussion of school method; and the objection which Ford had so continually to answer was best and most simply put into words by Mr.

Wishart, during an after-dinner talk. Ford and I had gone to dine with Mr. and Miss Wishart after one of the weekly staff meetings at the school; Mr. Wishart, occasionally present at staff-meetings (where he would drop out a common sense suggestion from time to time, never without its value), had on that occasion been away, as was more usual. We were at about the middle of the school's third term; the twenty-two children gathered in by the end of the first term had been increased to thirty-three; there were four forms (kindergarten, Forms I*a* and I*b*, and Form II.), and two more trained teachers, a master and a mistress, had brought the staff, with Ford, up to five. The two newer members and Mme. Andrée had been giving voice that afternoon to their searchings of spirit over several of the details in Ford's treatment of current problems; and Ford, as we sat with our coffee in the Wisharts' drawing-room, was talking about his difficulty in seeing what was the obstacle, exactly, at which they always appeared to pull up short.

'People generally pull up when they can't see where you're leading them,' suggested Mr. Wishart; and he went on to say, in effect, that there was something in Ford's system that puzzled him, and that perhaps it would be this that disquieted the three teachers, though they might not quite know it. He was more outside the school; they, very likely, couldn't see the wood for the trees, and could only jib at this and that detail. His trouble was that he couldn't see what was to

become of Ford's pupils, eventually, in the knock-about conditions of the everyday world. It wasn't that he was afraid they would be soft ; but he was afraid they would be too fine. Ford was teaching them to think about what is right, he said, with a humorous suggestion of disapproval in his tone. While a man is thinking about what is right, he added, other folk march along and trample over him. Did he mean, Ford inquired, that they ought to know how to trample back ? Mr. Wishart wouldn't go so far as to say that ; but it was something of the sort, he admitted, that he had in mind. Not exactly trampling . . . no ; rather the kind of spirit that could resist trampling.

' But aren't we trying to get that ? ' Ford put in. Was not the spirit of real thought—the reflective spirit —exactly the spirit that would end its reflections by refusing to be trodden upon ? Mr. Wishart was still doubtful. The point that he wanted to raise was whether the reflective spirit that Ford was training up would not reflect for too long—and find out that while it had been reflecting others had been acting, and monopolising the first and the best chances.

Ford was not forgetting, he reminded us, that reflection has to result in action. The children were learning that all right ; and his own idea was that sensible reflection would result in better conceived action. But this was just the point upon which Mr. Wishart took him up. His whole doubt was whether Ford's spirit of reflection might not be a snare and a

delusion from the practical point of view. It was a fine thing in itself, but it only existed for itself. If you began reflecting, in a philosophical way, you went on reflecting—for the sake of an intellectual satisfaction. You thought for the sake of thinking; and then you got overtaken by the man who thinks for the sake of business.

Ford gave a thoughtful pause to this. 'You're perfectly right, Mr. Wishart,' he said at last. That standpoint, he went on, was entirely reasonable and coherent. But honestly, which was the better type—the man who thinks for the sake of thought, or the man who thinks for the sake of business? Was not the one in search of the spiritual reality, and the other only in search of the material?

But we have to live by the material; this was Mr. Wishart's objection—and that was the fault that he found with Ford's system. It was a grand system, but he was afraid of its becoming altogether too spiritual.

Miss Wishart looked up quickly from her needlework. 'Can anything be too spiritual?' she asked quietly. Ford, too, had looked up at the sound of her voice, and their eyes met for a moment.

'You're right, Margaret,' said Mr. Wishart. Perhaps, he went on, he should not have said 'too spiritual.' Perhaps he had meant, rather, too metaphysical. Ford characterised this as a really valuable piece of criticism. Mr. Wishart meant, he suggested,

that he tended to encourage thinking just for the sake of thinking—just for the enjoyment of the process—instead of for the spirit of truth which ought to be behind the thought.

Mr. Wishart confessed that he had had the notion in his mind; but he could see that it was not true. It was, he saw, the spirit behind that Ford wanted to bring out. And it was a fine spirit—but it was just its fineness that he was afraid of. He would grant freely that it was *right*. . . .

'And will you grant me that it is its rightness that you're afraid of?' asked Ford, quietly interrupting.

Mr. Wishart would grant even that, in a sense. He could see where Ford was driving him. Ford did not think, he said, that any one can be too right; so he was driving him on to put what is practical before what is right. Well, his defence was that nothing is right unless it is practical as well.

Ford wholly agreed, but objected that they were beginning to argue in a circle. Suppose he, Ford, stood out for training children in pure rightness of thought—what was Mr. Wishart's objection?

Mr. Wishart's objection was, in essence, that Ford would then be training up a race of intellectual martyrs. These young thinkers of his were bound to suffer—terribly.

Ford took leave to doubt it. They were not growing up into such pure, unmitigated thinkers as Mr. Wishart

imagined. They were learning to make their thinking practical—learning how to 'get ahead,' even in business. But—suppose for the sake of argument that they all had to become martyrs in the cause of truth—what then?

Then, in Mr. Wishart's drily expressed opinion, their parents would consider themselves to have been extensively swindled. Parents wanted their children taught to be successes, not picturesque failures. Perhaps, Ford allowed, that is what parents think they want. But he insisted that what they really want, if they are decent parents, is that their children may be good—clever afterwards, and successful after that, if fortune is favourable; but good, whatever may happen to them in consequence.

Miss Wishart looked up again, and again met Ford's eyes. Then she looked at her father. What the *children* wanted, she said, was just goodness, whether the parents or the teachers really wanted it for them or not. That was her own reason for thinking that Ford was in the right.

Mr. Wishart gave a businesslike sigh. On reflection he, too, was afraid that Ford was right. The children had to concentrate on goodness—and then dree their weird. Ford was not going to accept this judgment without qualification. The 'weird,' he was certain, would not prove so fateful as Mr. Wishart imagined. He slyly suggested that what Mr. Wishart was really afraid of was not goodness, but unco' guidness—a

quality which he had no intention whatever of encouraging.

I was not wholly surprised to learn, a week or two later, that Ford and Miss Wishart were to be married as soon as the summer holidays began. There had been indications which even a young teacher, fresh in enthusiasm for his art, was too human to pass by without a sapient glance. I had felt sure of it; and I was glad when the definite news came. Ford's happiness was beautiful to see; and since happiness, to him, was a thing that naturally translated itself into inspired work, he seemed somehow to infect the school, children and staff alike, with the radiant enthusiasm that overflowed from him. It was as though the school itself were in love.

Ford and his wife left for Normandy early in August 1905. I had acted as best man at their simple wedding —only the Wisharts and a few near friends were present—and in a few days I had a letter from Ford referring, in the first instance, to my carrying out that office :—

EVREUX, *Aug.* 6, 1905.

DEAR K.,—I never thanked you for your efficient steersmanship, while if it hadn't been for you I might have gone to the wrong church and married the wrong lady, and been carried off for all I know to Mentone or even Monte Carlo! Expect no sense from me; I am countless centuries old to-day, and much too wise to talk sense; also I am an infant and inarticulate. Margaret (I haven't learnt to

say ' my wife ' yet—it 's the thought of that phrase that drives men to go honeymooning abroad—and anyhow I shan't use it to you) says she caught you looking very end-of-a-chapterish just before we went off. Remember I 'm not going to stand any beastly pride from you when we come back—the new chapter begins exactly where the old one left off.—Yours ever, W. E. F.

Mr. and Mrs. Ford came home full of plans for ' completing the circle,' as Ford put it, of the school's life. They had talked over at length the difficulty which Ford had begun to experience in getting the staff to go with him whole-heartedly, and also the comparative failure of the school, in most cases, to win the co-operation of the parents ; and they had great hopes that under the new *ménage* a more effectual meeting of minds would be possible. Ford spoke to me of their conclusions soon after their return. He had taken very seriously the tentative phrase to which Mr. Wishart's criticism—identical, we believed, with the subconscious criticism of the staff—had reduced itself. It was perfectly true, he said, that his contact with us all, children, staff and parents, had been ' too metaphysical.' His own instinct always was to search out and explain the philosophy of school work, and to be satisfied when he had done so and also translated the philosophy into effective practice. With children, this succeeded perfectly. All children are born philosophers, if by a philosopher we understand one who

loves to search out the nature and the causes of things, and not necessarily to explain them in complicated and abstract language. Ford's philosophy for the young was sufficiently concrete and practical, as his method of teaching them to apply every principle to everyday life clearly evinces; but he was not at this time quite satisfied in his own mind about his teaching system. Might it not be, after all, 'too metaphysical' —too closely dependent upon intellect—tending too much to isolate intellect? He thought that perhaps he was neglecting the direct simplicities of approach to a child's mind through feelings and instincts.

I do not think he was right in this idea, as far as he himself was concerned; he taught through feelings and instincts more than he knew. Possessing the 'strong personality' so much desiderated by Mrs. A. and Mrs. B., he felt the need to keep it in the background. It shone through his work strongly enough whatever he was doing. But I think it was true, as I haltingly tried to explain to him, that the intellectual harness in which he kept himself might be heavy for those who were working with him. His method without himself tended to become too abstract in a teacher's mind; and the teacher, as was natural, instinctively laid the blame upon the method. Ford said that this instinct was not only natural, but perfectly just. It was his business to arrange method so that it would work in other hands than his own. In so far as it became artificial to the staff, and led

them to think that he wanted the children taught to be too exclusively philosophical, it was wrong method, and needed recasting—simplifying. I was angry at this self-accusation. Ford's method, I felt, was too fine a thing to be watered down to suit teachers who would not make the effort to understand it; and I blurted out something to this effect. Ford said that better understanding was what he chiefly hoped for, now. Mrs. Ford would be able to help. We must thaw some of the professional frigidity out of the staff meetings. A drawing-room, and the comfortable pervasiveness of afternoon tea, would do a good deal. I took in the implication that Mrs. Ford's particular gift in conversation—her power of quietly stating an issue in its simplest human terms—would do a good deal more.

The influence of a drawing-room, and of its presiding mistress, was to have its effect, too, upon the relation between the school and the parents. 'They are always on their hind legs with me,' Ford observed. It was true that he had never overcome the tendency of most of the parents to stand upon the defensive with him. They thought him 'so clever,' and were afraid to give themselves away. Mrs. Ford was, actually, of the greatest possible help in getting the school and the parents upon easy terms. Both in this and in promoting the education of the staff, her presence was a source of strength for the more difficult time that lay ahead—the time when Ford's system would have

to struggle to make good its hold upon children of an age to have their careers seriously considered and to be sent off, in the interest of their careers, to go through the conventional scholastic mill.

The year that succeeded Ford's marriage was a year of quiet, happy work with everything going well. Numbers increased, and the school extended upwards into three new forms, with a corresponding increase of staff. Mr. Wishart's plan for the gradual, tentative introduction of co-education had worked admirably; Ford's was known and recognised by this time as a 'boys-and-girls' school, and no one appeared to think the fact, thus gradually accomplished, anything but right and natural. The children were reaching an age, however, when the girls' work began to diverge from the boys' in a few practical subjects, and it was a good thing that a mistress of the house should be at the head of these activities. Mrs. Ford had not made a technical study of domestic economy, but she had managed a good-sized household with Scottish thriftiness, and could teach from experience rather than from theory.

I believe it was Mrs. Ford who sensed a personal feeling at the root of that uneasiness on the part of the staff which Ford and Mr. Wishart had identified only with an impersonal solicitude for the children. Ford's system was not rigid; every teacher was called upon to make an individual contribution to its working, and to think and plan for its realisation in detail and for

the linking-up of its parts ; but it was very definitely Ford's system all the time—if only because Ford thought and planned very much more effectually than the rest of us. This made some of the staff feel that they had less control than was their due ; and the feeling was accentuated by Ford's scheme of having every difficulty of discipline referred directly to himself. In both cases we all knew that Ford was right : his system of teaching would have gone to pieces if any of us had been able to fly off at a tangent upon any method of our own, regardless of the need to unify the whole ; and the plain fact that Ford, by taking all matters of discipline into his own hands, had done away with the continual drizzle of small, futile punishments that usually disfigures the work of a school, was enough to prevent any one from wanting their individual control back in that respect. But it is possible both to see that a thing is right, and to resent it.

The continual hankering of the staff for a system of marks and prizes was partly an expression of their desire to wield some symbol of personal authority. Ford wanted all control, including his own, to be as impersonal as possible—as much as possible an appeal to the children's own desire for the best, both as individuals and as a community. But he recognised that something in the nature of a Votes for Teachers agitation was at the back of the staff's mind, and tried to work out a right answer to the inarticulate demand. He hit upon a new system of marks and prizes in

consequence. At the end of a term every teacher was to make a list of children who had done thoroughly well, in that teacher's opinion, in one subject or another. Ford carefully explained that we were not necessarily to put down the name of a child who could be considered as 'top of the Form' in a particular subject, but of the child who seemed to have worked the hardest and to have made the most progress considering his capabilities. To be mentioned in this way upon a teacher's end-of-term list was to receive one vote towards a 'progress prize'; this prize, in each Form, went to the child who had the greatest number of teachers' votes. When two children in a Form tied for the prize, their claims were settled by the votes of the other children in that Form—votes that were always cast with the impartiality of the strong childish sense of justice.

The system worked well in every way: it was Ford's 'technique of praise' in concrete and official form; there was a general feeling that the prizes had gone to the children who really deserved them best, and the staff felt that their judgment had found voice. At the same time the system was not in its essence competitive —and to that extent did not satisfy the other underlying demand of the staff, that Ford's school should give more of a preparation for the worldly scramble. On this point Ford was obdurate. He regarded competition as an evolutionary stage more than ready to be superseded in civilised life by co-operation, and held

that the old competitive impulse in man, like the combative impulse, was strong enough—and troublesome enough—without being fostered by education.

It is difficult to write about the later development of Ford's school, the development through which we hoped it would gradually blossom out into an educational institution of effective size and influence, and even, perhaps, set going some small wave of general reform in education. To describe it, now, is to describe its failure to achieve these ideals, in the rather desperate hope that this failure may lead others to follow a similar educational ideal with success. Ford's ideal is worth following; of that no one who worked with him or studied under him has the slightest doubt. If I make an attempt to trace the causes of its failure, it is not with any idea of demonstrating the hopelessness of a fine educational ideal under present conditions, but rather of showing how far the ideal could be, and was, carried, and why the difficulties arose that prevented it from being carried further. I have used, and repeated, the word 'failure'; but I must be understood to mean the failure, not of the ideal, but of its rise to a further pitch of development than Ford achieved in the first decade of the twentieth century. The failure passes; the ideal, surely, is worthy to remain. And the 'failure' was only the fact that Ford's educational impetus was brought to a standstill at one particular milestone, beyond which, perhaps, few of his time could have followed him.

It would be easier to dwell upon his success—upon the fact that a few hundred children passed through his hands who never wholly forgot his influence, and who in their turn are spreading by now some reflection, at least, of the light that suffused his teaching. But it is better, I think, to ask why his teaching, comparatively, failed; to try to ascertain how it was that so fine an educational method could not establish itself beyond the point at which convention called a halt.

Convention crystallises itself, to my own view, in the person of the uncle of one of our children, who came with the child's mother to look over the school. He was large, bluff, friendly, and inaccessible even to the most slangy expression of an educational notion. Ford told him that we tried to teach the children to pull together—a sufficiently sporting simplification of our educational idea; the uncle replied, taking on a redder tinge with the effort of abstract thought, that kids had to learn how to fight for their own hand if they were going to make their way in the world. He was afraid that his small nephew would 'get soft,' he said, 'with all these girls around' (his nephew had at any rate learned how to meet a girl's hard common sense); he was glad that the boy should be learning to think, but he considered (with Mrs. A. and in almost the same words) that 'there is too much thinking nowadays.' As a study in current humanity he was a joy to Ford—a joy often quoted, later on. As the influential uncle of one of our children, he stood for

Ford as the shape and symbol of our most insuperable obstacle. As he turned to go away with the boy's mother we heard him say—before he could have thought, if he had thought, to be out of earshot—'My dear girl, when *are* you going to send that child to a proper school?'

Boys who went from Ford's to a 'proper school' always did well. They were seldom placed high at the first transplanting—I can imagine a certain bewilderment at the difference of standard, a bewilderment not unshared by those who applied to them a rule-of-thumb test of knowledge; but they had learned to think, and quickly mastered the main lines of a more automatic method of instruction. It was a common thing for a boy from Ford's to be promoted twice in his first term elsewhere, and promoted again every term until he had found his level. Ford might have been content, as, some years later, he said himself, simply to train up young children so that they might climb the conventional ladder of learning the more nimbly. All educational reform has its best chance with the youngest children, and the most sensible and natural form of education in England is to be found in the kindergartens; Ford might have been satisfied by being allowed to carry a rational method to a further stage. But his training of younger children, much as he loved the work, was only the foundation for a very much wider and fuller scheme. It was for the realisation of this scheme that he struggled during the last two years of the school's life.

His hope was to build up and extend the school until it carried children through to University age or to the age when they should go out into the world. It could not satisfy him to begin and end by preparing children to make the best of conventional education and its disjointed compromises. His work as an educator reached out to a single, definite goal—that the school should send into the world of thought and action young men and women who had learned the unity of all knowledge with itself and with life. It may well be imagined that if his children were sent away to learn the parcelling-up and pigeon-holing of knowledge that for many people constitutes education, it was little comfort to Ford that he had trained them so that they could do it intelligently. He could not take a pride in their lending their intelligence to a process which he regarded as fundamentally stupid—the process of putting up partitions in the mind between different 'subjects,' dividing and subdividing, seldom or never uniting.

This was not merely a matter of scholastic theory to him. He believed the whole outlook of civilised people to be qualified by their prevailing inability to hold more than one idea in their heads at a time—and their inability, as he once said, 'to put their heads together over any question without knocking them together.' Discussion, he said, is the machinery of agreement, which is preliminary to the co-operation that distinguishes civilised from barbaric life; and we do not dis-

cuss, we dispute. Each of us follows up his own narrow train of thought, firmly states his own narrow conclusion, and has done with it ; you rarely find two parties to a discussion attending to each other's argument—the first, elementary necessity if they are to agree. As Ford traced all the failures of civilisation in some measure to failure of agreement, so he traced failure of agreement to the division and separation of ideas that is fostered by our prevailing modes of teaching. Division there had to be—dissection, careful arrangement and classification ; but always with a view to subsequent reconstruction and reunion, the fuller and more complete for the division that had gone before. Our usual system of education, he said, divides ; and then forgets to reunite.

It was thought by some that Ford's eventual abandonment of his school was due to infirmity of purpose, or to a kind of petulance ; in reality, he gave it up rather than make it auxiliary to the conventional system. It was not that he despaired of prevailing methods ; he believed that they could and would be obliged to undergo a process of gradual, organic reform ; but he believed that this reform could only be brought about from within—not, at any rate, by children, barely grounded in a different way of thought. These would only show themselves somewhat more intelligent pigeon-holers than the rest. Ford's desire was to show the completed result of a properly unified system ; and it was because this essential aim of his

proved impossible of achievement that he gave up the attempt.

A single instance will perhaps show best what it was that he declined to continue doing. A boy of fourteen, one of our most sensible all-round thinkers though in no way particularly brilliant, and the son of parents who had always shown a keen and an understanding interest in the school, was one upon whom we had securely reckoned to go on with us. It was rather suddenly decided (perhaps an uncle, in this case, had a say in the matter—I do not know) that the boy should go to one of the greater public schools. Such a defection of the faithful was always a grief to Ford. He saw that it was not wholly the parents' fault. The keeping of effective numbers in the upper part of the school—now just passing the age of fourteen, the conventional time of transition to public-school life—was an uncertain business ; and parents who were most keen that the building up of the school should continue were also afraid that only a straggling few would remain to constitute the upper forms for which we hoped. But, as Ford always pointed out to them, they did not greatly help to remove this fear by taking their own children away.

Ford did not plan to teach Greek until the age of sixteen, when it could be learned with quickness and certainty by children trained in the general study of the science of language ; this boy was required to pass an entrance examination that included elementary

Greek, within six weeks' time. Ford gave him half an hour's coaching every afternoon, without homework, to teach him Greek and the particular formalisms required for examination-passing in general. With these six weeks of quiet, unhurried preparation the boy passed the examination easily. He had been so trained that, as Greek was only a special case of a known system of language, so the unfamiliar formalisms of the examination system were only a special and a somewhat narrow way of expressing certain parts of a realised system of knowledge. The boy took a good place in the public school and rose rapidly. He came to see us several times later on. His work at school, parcelled out into a series of watertight compartments, was growing steadily narrower in its scope; he was learning no natural science, scarcely anything about his own language, nothing to any purpose except different, disconnected branches of classics and mathematics. He remained keen and full of interest in the world and its concerns, but with an unguided keenness and an ignorant interest. Plainly his interests and his knowledge were growing more and more detached from one another. His work was giving him no terms in which to think and speak about the real concerns of life. It was just work, to be done and put aside. The boy's mind and his nature, which we had watched growing into an effective whole while he was with us, were growing apart—the one sterile, the other starved of thought.

It was against results of this kind that Ford's soul revolted; and they began to appear with increasing regularity during the school's last two years, when one child after another drifted away at about the age of fourteen, to return presently as an 'old' boy or girl, shyly affectionate, full of inarticulate phrases of gratitude for old times, and manifestly resigned to new times that gave them little satisfaction of the spirit. They came back, as Ford once said, with their wings tidily and neatly clipped—no cheerful spectacle for the man who had trained them in the beginnings of the art of mental flight.

A Form of children over fourteen—Form V.—struggled into being with the opening of what was to prove the last year of the school's life. There was some talk of making it a Form of boys alone; but Mr. Wishart, who first threw out the idea, never entertained it seriously. None of us had the least doubt by now upon the merits of the co-educational case; and from the point of view of success, there had been very little evidence that prejudice on this subject stood in the school's way. Parents who withdrew their children often lamented that a 'proper school' would have to be a separate boys' or girls' school; and it seemed likely that in excluding girls from the new upper forms we might lose not only the girls, but one or two boys as well—besides surrendering a principle in which we had learned by experience to believe. Ford, indeed, was sure that to educate small boys and girls together

was chiefly important as leading up to natural relations during adolescence; it was then that the principal advantage of co-education—'the civilising of the sexes'—would really begin. It was not the least of the tragedy which the school's ending implied for him that this development of a sane intellectual understanding between adolescent boys and girls was denied the thought and care which he was so ready and eager to devote to it.

The struggle for existence which was the ordeal of Form V. during that concluding year can best be presented in three acts—the three terms of the school's last twelvemonth. The starting of the Form was in any case a precarious undertaking. There were five children, three boys and two girls, who had surpassed the standard of Form IV*a*, and whose parents had faith enough to let them adventure upon the further course. Ford felt that it was now or never—to reject this somewhat meagre opportunity of extension would be to put a closure upon later opportunities—and Mr. Wishart agreed that the new Form had better be started. When another boy, withdrawn by provisional notice given before the preceding summer term, was unexpectedly returned to the fold at the end of the summer holidays, we rejoiced as at a favourable omen. Form V. would now come into being full six strong. And when another girl, a new-comer of fifteen, elder sister of a boy already in the school, was entered on the very day that term began, we felt that at this rate

ultimate success was assured. Seven children who had crossed the fourteen-year-old Rubicon were a nucleus worthy of respect for the foundation of an upper school. I think that at this time we all upheld one another in a desperate optimism ; Mrs. Ford, I remember, even brought in the argument that seven was a lucky number.

The autumn term seemed to begin under the happiest auspices—and in three weeks there was trouble brewing among the staff. Perhaps there was an underconsciousness that our hopes ran beyond our prospects ; but the instinct even of rats leads them to do nothing worse than desert a ship that is doomed to sink. They do not accelerate the sinking by gnawing at her sides. Our rats talked with one another, and with some of the parents, and their talk was of the kind that disintegrates loyalty. I am convinced, I must say in justice, that they had no conscious motive in doing so ; they helped in their degree to pull Ford's school down because they felt unsure of its success, and so felt in honour bound to prophesy, and to exonerate themselves from, its failure. But incidentally they lost the school two of its seven elder pupils ; and this was the conclusion of the first act.

The spring term that followed found us with five elder children, four of them under provisional notice to leave if more should not be forthcoming. The spring term is always the least cheerful of terms ; colds rage, even if more formidable epidemics are absent, and in

any case human enthusiasm is liable to fall to its lowest ebb somewhere about the end of February—'the year's two-o'clock-in-the-morning,' as Ford once put it. The parents of our Form V. talked with one another, and with the more despondent members of the staff; and thereafter Ford and Mrs. Ford talked with them in vain. They were convinced—perhaps they were right—that Form V. would never grow into a completed upper school. Provisional notices were confirmed; the existence of Form V. was to end with the ending of the spring term.

Ford had lost. We talked it over in full conclave—the staff a little remorseful, and inclined, too late, to try to see the bright side of things—towards the end of the term. There was no hope at all of building up a new upper school; the rot had already spread to the parents of Forms IV*a* and even IV*b*, who were giving panic-stricken notice of removal at the end of the next term. The staff, I believe, really hoped that at last this ambitious foolishness of trying to extend the school beyond the preparatory level might be at an end. The attitude of Ford and his wife, fully backed up by Mr. Wishart, came as a surprise to them. The school was not to continue as a preparatory. It was to end with the following summer term; and notice of its winding-up was to be sent to all the parents forthwith. This was the mildly and by no means pleasantly dramatic conclusion of the second act. I did not envy Ford his Easter holidays—I did not enjoy my

own. He and his wife went with Mr. Wishart to North Cornwall, and the three talked, I believe, at length about the possibility of another educational scheme, always to come back to the fact of present failure. They could form no judgment, in the end, but that the present failure was absolute, and under present conditions irreparable. Ford began at this time, I know, to look beyond the process of education itself for the causes of the failure, and to ask himself what might be the fundamental trouble of a civilisation so slow to develop its educational function. But his dealing with this wider problem must be the subject of another chapter.

The third act, the summer term, our last term, opened in false sunshine, as false as the May cloudlessness that led on to the downpours of June and July. It was not that the ill weather of our final weeks symbolised a prevailing gloominess among ourselves; the school went down with all its flags flying, and in a way there was more of essential harmony in its work at the end than there had even been before. Ford seemed resolved to throw the very best of himself into a last effort on behalf of the school's remnant, and we were all infected with his energy and enthusiasm. Misgivings among the staff were at an end, except the misgiving that it might be a heroic mistake to refuse to go on quietly with the material for good work that still remained. But there was a sense of finality over it all. It was the end; and if we all strove so eagerly to

make the most of it, the chief reason was because we felt it to be the end. If it had been a new, constricted beginning—Ford's school with its wings clipped—I doubt if the same feeling would have inspired us. I feel no doubt at all that it was best for the school to end as it did, in cheerful, far from fatalistic recognition of the inevitable. It was not the kind of school to seek for itself a level that would compromise with convention. It had to stand or fall in the light of Ford's inspiration as an educator; ultimately, it had to fall, and Ford had to dig deeper into reality to find out why it fell. If it had continued, maintaining itself upon a specious compromise, it would have grown stagnant, and Ford would never have begun to analyse that central trouble of civilisation which still makes it impossible for such teaching as his to achieve success.

An idea was mooted by some of the parents for keeping the lower forms in being, and two of the staff approached Ford and Mr. Wishart with a proposal for taking over the younger children. Ford was not unwilling that this should be done, and even offered to draw up a simplified scheme for a young children's school that should aim, not at extending its scope, but at providing as rational a preparation as possible for conventional instruction. The plan was not followed up, for a variety of reasons. Ostensibly, a financial difficulty was the chief obstacle. The school house and its arrangements were on a scale that would overburden the resources of a small school. But a

way out of this and the other difficulties that arose could have been found if the will had been present. When it came to the point, even those who had felt the strongest misgivings about Ford's wider educational ideal, found themselves unable to face the prospect of taking over children whom Ford had taught, and giving them, inevitably, less than Ford had given. Eventually, only the kindergarten was kept on, by the faithful Mme. Andrée; Mr. Wishart made her a present of the connection, and she took rooms in the neighbourhood and carried on the methods of Froebel, with some reminiscence of Ford, until family affairs recalled her to Switzerland some years later.

One father took the trouble to write to Ford a letter that was a reasoned criticism of the decision to give up the school. While expressing regret that Ford's 'intelligent system should not have met with more quantitative appreciation,' he put forward the opinion that it was Ford's business as an educator to adjust his system to suit the world as it is. 'Your way is better, I fully recognise,' he wrote. 'But it has not worked; and if our stupidity is to blame for that fact (as I certainly think it is), then surely you should make things easier for us, not throw us over altogether.' I wish I had a copy of the reply that Ford showed to me before he sent it off. It expressed his real reasons for dropping the school better in a few sentences than I could analyse them in many pages. The bald gist of it was that Ford could only see two ways of educat-

ing—the right way and the wrong way; he had worked out as popularly as possible the way that he considered right, and he was not going to do the only thing that remained to do: to compromise with the way that he considered wrong. In this, he explained, he was not setting up an absolute of rightness in education; he was simply following his own nose. When he found that the way which he considered right was blocked, he could only set himself to find out what the obstruction was and how it might eventually be removed. That, he concluded, was an investigation which he meant to begin forthwith.

The real question that he had had to decide was whether the obstacle to the practical success of his system—a system, be it remembered, that was not his alone, but was based upon educational principles long ago accepted as gospel in theory and left on the shelf in practice—was one that could be removed by education itself, or one for which the cause would have to be sought in some flaw of civilisation outside the educational field. The fact that the main principles which he followed had been in existence for centuries had the casting vote in his decision. Three hundred years had passed since the Moravian educator, Comenius, laid down a system of which Ford's was the direct descendant; the principles of Comenius were everywhere accepted in theory without producing any but the most superficial influence upon actual school work. Three hundred years, eight or

ten generations, Ford considered enough for the conversion of sound principle into effectual practice, if the evolution of teaching alone were concerned. The blindest conservatism yields in time to a process of gradual, organic development. The obstruction must lie outside the educational circle. 'There is a dead hand upon education,' Ford wrote in a letter to me, 'and I have got to find out what it is.'

He did not expect to find out any immediate, easy formula for the explanation of the 'dead hand.' As he thought more about the question he saw more and more clearly how large was the undertaking to which he had committed himself. It was nothing less than a study of civilised society as a whole, an attempt to trace and map out all the ramifying influences of social life. Somewhere among that network of influences there was a tangle, a falsity, in which the advance of education was caught up and impeded: and to unravel the tangle it would be necessary to know where every thread ought to lead. It was thus that Ford became absorbed in the gigantic subject of the organisation of social life; and from this, again, that he developed, and left, alas, unfinished, a system of social philosophy that will be outlined later on.[1]

He threw himself with a certain sternness of zeal into the new work. It was of his own free will that

[1] This reference is to the larger work we have under consideration, and not to the few notes on Ford's philosophy which make up chapter xi.

he abandoned school work, but none the less for that—perhaps the more—he missed his school terribly, and needed the consolatory distraction of hard thinking. He found another solace in watching with Mrs. Ford the dawning intelligence of the two little girls who had been born to them. There remained a note of restrained sadness in Ford's expression ever after the giving up of the school, and I think no one but his wife knew quite how hard he had been hit ; but to see him with his children was to see the old Ford as though no reverse had happened to him in all his life. He seemed to participate in the freshness of their experience, to feel in himself the infantile, elemental wonder with which his babies looked out upon the visible universe.

CHAPTER X

FORD'S great undertaking began, as his venture into school-keeping had begun, with a study of authorities; he became again a frequenter of the British Museum reading-room, and began to fill the first of a series of manuscript books (I have seventeen of these before me) with notes upon the natural history of civilisation. One point struck him almost from the first. I remember his speaking of it to me, certainly within a month of beginning his investigation; and it creeps into his first note-book at the ninth page, becoming more and more pronounced thereafter. The authorities were all profoundly ignorant of something that Ford dimly knew. Or rather, they were congenitally blind to certain lights or colourings in the history of civilisation that struck vividly upon his eye, though without immediate significance.

Ford possessed some undefinable sixth sense that often brought him to conclusions more true and complete than seemed to be available from the evidence before him. He appeared at times, in his moods of concentration, literally to originate knowledge; reaching out beyond his power of clear and acute reasoning there was an intuitive faculty that seemed to grasp the

evolution of fact without intermediary thought about causes and probabilities. It was as though he put himself in touch with the essential process of becoming. I am obliged to tantalise the reader as much as I am tantalised myself over that elusive realisation which was at the root of Ford's eventual views upon the progress of man. He loathed mystifications, and was always lucid and illuminating upon any point that he had reasoned out; but these intuitive conclusions of his refused to fit into any formula. I could say that his early intuition of a flaw in our whole conception of civilisation was this or that, but only to find that it was really the other—an 'other' which escapes definition.

I have only one distinct clue: Ford's extraordinary knowledge of working-class life and thought and feeling had something to do with it. The 'masses,' upon whose labour civilisation rests, have an ethic and a philosophy of their own, comprehended but unexpressed by themselves, uncomprehended and mis-stated by their would-be interpreters. Ford in some way knew it from the inside; and he saw a fundamental unreality in a state of society in which the thoughts of the vast majority are a closed book, or rather a book wide open but unreadable, to the comparatively few who endeavour to steer the entire bulk. 'It isn't they' (the masses) 'who suffer,' he once said to me; 'it 's us.' Civilisation, he insisted, in so far as it is civilisation and not an unhappy illusion, is unity, unanimity; and the

people at the top, whose privilege of leisure and educated thought should mean that they represent the mind, the self-consciousness of the whole, are simply uncivilised—'tamed and pampered savages playing at manners,' as Ford once put it—in so far as their consciousness extends only to themselves and to their own group.

This conception of the prevailing culture as an essentially hollow thing, a painted shell detached from the realities that all men share, gives one index, I think, to the flaw which Ford's intuition perceived in the civilised life of to-day. But it was an explanation much wider and also much more definite of which he was in search. I read his note-books, and the explanation seems to be there, complete and ready, urgent even, to be uttered; I look up from his pages and try to find words for the thought, and the whole sense of it has vanished. I wonder, if Ford had lived to write his book upon the principles of civilisation, whether he could have reduced to clear language his inner sense that he had of our central stumbling-block. The word 'fellowship' haunts my mind when I try to express for myself the essential which, in Ford's view, all civilisations have lacked; but that is a word whose meaning depends entirely upon experience of the reality.

Ford had taken a house in Golden Square; partly to be near the Museum, partly because he had a curious

fondness, which Mrs. Ford found no difficulty in sharing, for the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury. He said that for middle-class people of a serious turn of mind Bloomsbury was the only district in London that fitted. Everywhere else you found pretentiousness. Kensington was socially pretentious; Chelsea æsthetically; Bayswater, St. John's Wood, Battersea, had each their distinctive brand of artificiality. Bloomsbury alone, he explained to me with exaggerated solemnity, was wholly, perfectly uncoloured. Its bygone standing as a fashionable quarter gone, it had acquired no new status to which it would be criminal not to conform; it was a trifle drab and musty, perhaps, but in your own corner you could sweep away the dust of the eighteenth century and be free to think your own thoughts uncensored. The environment of his working hours, the Museum reading-room, also satisfied his sense of fitness. It was an intellectual centre where there was a real democracy of intellect. The reader in the next place to yours might be a Rabbi translating an old Hebrew manuscript, or a veterinary student investigating the physiology of the horse; there was no convention of study, and yet you were in an atmosphere of study that was quietly stimulating. Ford threw out the idea that perhaps if every one were left more free to study in his own way, an education might be evolved that would undermine the artificialities of civilisation. It is hardly fair to quote a loose, half-humorous statement of this kind, but it

indicates the general direction in which Ford's mind was working at this time. He wanted to see the art of thinking freed from the vague, atmospheric, but powerful influences that dictate to us, before we begin, what we ought to think.

The mental atmosphere of Bloomsbury and the Museum reading-room might be free enough, but the physical atmosphere was another matter; and after six months or so Mrs. Ford began to be anxious about Ford's health. Ford admitted that the British Museum was not an ideal breathing-place. 'There are three kinds of air,' he said to me once, 'fresh air, stale air, and ventilation. Ventilation is the worst of the three.' The filtered, devitalised air of the Museum certainly did not suit him; and Bloomsbury itself is not exactly one of the lungs of London. Mrs. Ford declared that he had suffered more and lost more vitality than he knew, or would recognise, over the failure of the school; and there was no doubt, besides, that the magnitude of his new task weighed upon him; at all events his physical well-being began to be a matter of concern. I do not know how far this factor, and a growing distaste for 'ventilation,' made him decide that there was little more to be gained by poring over the scores of volumes upon his list that were still unread; but I think that his disquiet was mainly due to the unsatisfactoriness of the learned authorities to whom he had turned for guidance at the beginning of his quest. He was disappointed that the store of

recorded human wisdom told so little ; and the drop in his physical vitality was, I think, as much the reflex of this disappointment as anything else.

Ford decided, suddenly, to leave his family and to go abroad for a time. Mrs. Ford dwelt upon the question of his health as the determining reason ; Ford himself spoke only of the claims of his work. He has been severely criticised for spending three quarters of his time, in the last years of his life, in travelling alone. I am naturally a partisan of Ford's upon any point of criticism that can be brought against him, but I do not think it is for that reason that I cannot see the case against him as a deserter of the domesticities. If he had been a naval officer, his disappearances would have seemed the most natural thing in the world ; as a philosopher engaged in original research he had apparently no such claim upon the indulgence of some of his friends. He was in pursuit of an important truth ; books had told him all that they could about the nature of civilisation—or had shown him their incapacity to tell the thing that he chiefly cared to know ; and he went about the world to see and discover for himself at first hand. It was his business in life ; to regard it as a dereliction of marital duty seems to me a foolishness past criticism. But there are those who have never recognised that in the work and thought of Ford's last years lies the principal evidence of the greatness of his personality.

The first purpose of his travelling was to discover

what are the elements of permanence and stability in civilisation. He always remembered Palma as a supreme instance of a healthy and contented human society; but Palma was a peaceful backwater in the development of civilisation, where the real problems of modern life were not worked out but left out. He talked to me at some length, one evening about a week before he set out upon his first journey. Palma, he said, was the foundation, but no more than the foundation, of that which he conceived as an ideal society. It was the starting-point; a simple and a right form of social organisation that was capable of branching out into a state of being at once more highly developed and more conscious of itself. Every high civilisation had been a Palma at one time. Some such Arcadian phase was the necessary beginning. But then every civilisation, in its development, seemed obliged to lose the distinctive, fundamental qualities of the Palma people. Interests, ways of thought and language, became detached from one another; specialised development branched into endless divisions and subdivisions, but the unity of the whole was lost. Ford was convinced that disunity in any civilisation is deadness: that diversification is signal evidence of vitality, but that diversification which does not lead to a further and a fuller unity in difference is a sign that vitality is running into a blind alley. He had searched the historians in vain for any clear recognition of this principle; and it was essential to his investigation to

make sure whether the branching-out of civilisation into a necessary and inevitable diversity of separate paths must necessarily and inevitably lead to disunity, or whether there was any sign that a higher and more complex unity tended to supervene—as in the evolution of animal life, where diversity of organs and functions could only develop hand-in-hand with the growth of a centralised, co-ordinating nervous system.

In the one case Ford could only conclude that civilisation as we conceive it is a mistake, a mere proliferation without purpose, necessarily doomed to decline; and that it is our business to resign ourselves humbly to the simpler way of life—more or less after the Palma model. But if the complete unity in diversity which was his own ideal of a sound civilisation was attainable, it was clear that we were not going the right way to attain it. In this case, it was our business to investigate the more stable civilisations, and try to see what was the principle of permanence to which they owed their survival. This the historians had failed to do, if one can speak of failure in a task that has never been attempted. Ford intended to travel through India and China for a beginning—not, I need hardly say, to invent means of adapting the manners and customs of Indians and Chinese to English use, but to see if he could discover, by observation of their ways of life, the particular causes that had given to those peoples so long an innings in the history of civilisation. He had gained, by his stay in Palma,

an experience of unique value to his outlook upon human life; he hoped to catch in the same way the essential atmosphere of an ancient and long enduring social organisation.

The magnitude of the reaction which the East produced upon such a mind as Ford's can be imagined. The note-books, which record his deepening impression of an outlook fundamentally different from the Western, record also a struggle in his own mind—a struggle to escape being swept into a wider field of investigation than that upon which he had set out. He wanted to realise the Eastern philosophy of civilisation; he found it closely entangled with an Eastern philosophy of the universe. Take this series of jottings from one of the note-books :—

'Principle of permanence in civilisation is unity. Principle of progress is continual diversification. *Hyp.*: the East has an excess of the former principle, the West of the latter.

'*Obj.*: Castes. But these are old and fixed—no further diversification possible—would be thought impious. And they exist in static interrelation—an established unity in difference.

'*Nirvana*[1]: Very significant that in this ideal of an ultimate state no attraction whatever is held out but absolute union with deity; *i.e.* unity must end

[1] Obviously the Nirvana of common acceptance in the East, not the Nirvana of a few (chiefly Western) philosophers, in which individuality is in some sense conserved.

by swallowing up diversity, not perfecting and justifying it. Is this philosophically thinkable? The only unity that satisfies the equation seems to be a unity in absolute annihilation. If this is sound:—

'Much of the East has a religion that poetises belief in ultimate cessation of being. (*N.B.* Dass admits this, but with reservations as to the meaning of the term "being." Don't think he escapes my conclusion.)

'If being is unity in difference[1]—the wider the ramification, given full co-ordination of parts and functions, the higher the perfection. (*N.B.* This necessarily makes perfection a relative, not an absolute term.) Then Nirvana, abolition of difference, is abolition of being.

'*Unless* these people, as Dass seems to imply, can sense some entirely different category of being, quite unseizable by thought. (Nirvana is positive — ecstatic.) But if so, there is absolute cleavage between this sense and thought; *i.e.* thought is absolutely, not relatively, fallacious. Experience denies this.

'It appears that the conception of Nirvana results from letting go of thought at the point where thought demands an uncomfortable degree of diversity; falling back upon an ideal of unity pure and simple (*i.e.* logically, unity of nothing with nothing in nothingness); and importing into this entirely hollow ideal

[1] Lord is here taking for granted a philosophical definition of being which is, I believe, his own; the following chapter will make its basis clear.

a foreign content, derived from subconscious conviction of, or desire for, a happy ending to the story of life.

'*Concl.*: The East clings to the conception of unity at all costs; we cling to individuation at all costs. Their penalty is a scale of life that cannot proliferate beyond a certain point; ours, a blind, unordered proliferation that runs into culs-de-sac.'

'Hyp.' means hypothesis, 'Obj.' objection, and 'Concl.' conclusion—Ford's notes are freely interspersed with signposts of this kind, more illuminating, perhaps, to those familiar with his ways of thought than to the casual reader. As is natural, his jottings are often scrappy and tantalising (to use again the word that these note-books continually suggest); they mark, not realisations, but only the raw material for realisations; but Ford always shows the lines upon which his thought is working. 'Dass,' obviously, must have been some English-speaking Indian of his acquaintance, with whom he seems to have fallen into a discussion upon Oriental theology. It would be interesting to have full notes of that discussion.

It will be clear, at any rate, that Ford's study of the civilised consciousness led him into a consideration, not only of the civilisations of other peoples, but of their philosophies and religions. He told me later, at the end of his first journey to the East (which took him, as it turned out, no further than India, where he found the material so inexhaustible that China had to

wait), how he had consistently tried to keep his view objective; and how persistently the conclusion was forced upon him that the root causes of varying civilised tendencies were subjective—that men developed their societies according to their cast of thought, and that their thought-moulds were, simply, their spiritual beliefs or disbeliefs. He went out in the modern, scientific spirit of investigation, prepared to see different ways of life explained by varying conditions of life; he found himself more and more convinced that man moulds his circumstances far more than his circumstances mould man. Ultimately, the machinery of a society did not explain the society. To discover the 'how' was interesting in itself, but it threw no light upon the 'why.' The 'why' of a civilisation, he suspected, depended at bottom upon nothing but the root philosophy, conscious or subconscious, of its component people. The question remained upon what causes that philosophy depended. Ford's provisional theory was that human nature evolves a natural and a balanced philosophy of life of its own accord if nothing artificial steps in to hinder it in the process; in fact, that his investigation was not a search for the causes of a right social philosophy so much as for the origins of those checks and hindrances that make such a philosophy grow lopsided and unbalanced.

Meanwhile he had formed a very strong conviction upon the educational issue: that whatever our philo-

sophy of social life is, we take far too little trouble to express it in clear terms, either for ourselves or for the rising generation. Our conception of civilisation is, he maintained, almost entirely subconscious ; and the result is that whatever flaws exist in our social theory go undetected and are free to spread unregarded. We need, as Ford has written at the end of his Indian notebook, ' to teach a coherent system of social philosophy in our schools.' The Indian child at least learns a religious philosophy based upon the single, clear doctrine of the unity of all spirit—an anchorage for the social sense, though it is an anchorage in a half-truth.

The reason for our possessing no philosophy of social life Ford traced directly to our Western passion for individualism, for diversity of self-hood—the other, correlative half-truth, though we do not take the trouble to express it clearly to ourselves. We cannot teach a religion, because religion is at the mercy of sects, and each sect cares first and foremost for itself. We cannot teach social science, because social science is a matter of never-ending debate between political camps, and we fear bias on the part of teachers ; ultimately, a political camp is more important to us than a political truth. This was the general line of Ford's analysis—not, it must be remembered, a considered judgment, but a stage in the process of thought upon which he had embarked.

I was able to see very little of Ford at the time of

his first return to England; my time was seldom my own, and Ford was much engaged with a project that began, I believe, at Mr. Wishart's suggestion, and certainly continued with his help. It might be described, in its effect though not in its expressed intention, as a scheme to disseminate Ford's educational ideals by the method of peaceful penetration. Mr. Wishart was keen that Ford should begin to write upon education; not that he should produce a treatise, or even a text-book on method, but that he should submit articles on teaching to the educational papers, and try to instil the essence of his ideal into the world of educational thought. I think that, besides his real keenness for the effectual spread of Ford's views, Mr. Wishart was also plotting to give him an anchorage in England, and to obviate, or at least postpone, the need of another expedition to strange and foreign places. Mr. Wishart was not among those who indulged in reprobation of Ford's journeyings, but he would have been glad to keep his son-in-law at home.

Ford was not attracted by the idea of writing, as yet. His business at present, he said, was to take in rather than to give out; he did not want to write about the detail of education until he had recast his theory of education as a whole, and the recasting process depended upon that study of educational possibilities, in relation to our present phase of civilised life, which was now absorbing his energies. What he did need was to come more closely into touch with

representative people who, understanding sociology and politics, were well disposed towards educational reform ; not that he might convert them, but that they might make more clear to him what were the opinions and the hopes of the best available minds. Mr. Wishart's acquaintance with the world of the influential was enough to secure a number of introductions. I wish I could give a distinct account of Ford's interviews with these distinguished persons—some of them men who had much to do with the practical conduct of state affairs. But I had only one short talk with him on the subject, and a sketchy second-hand account of his impressions might do injustice to individual public servants who already have quite enough ill-informed criticism to put up with. But, to speak generally, Ford was depressed ; not by any ineptitude or lack of vision in the men with whom he talked, but by the obvious impossibility of their applying through public machinery more than a tiny fraction of the intellectual power and the idealism that they had it in them to give to the public service—and by their manifest resignation to the fact.

' They can't give their real best,' I remember Ford saying, ' and they have given up trying.' They were the victims, he went on, of the lazy English habit of making an opposition between the theoretical and the practical, with the result that a man sees what ought to be done, and then does not do it because there are difficulties in the way. No one but a fanatic, Ford said

(the word 'fanatic' was not, to him, a cheap term of abuse), could stand against our general tendency to call ourselves practical when we make difficulties a sufficient excuse for inaction. The politician, the public servant in general, could seldom be a fanatic and remain a public servant; he could only drift down stream with the sluggish current, keeping his slowly deteriorating principles to himself and becoming more and more a mere time-server in action. Some men could keep the fire of their original sincerity available, half-histrionically, for time-serving purposes; and these were the most dangerously misleading of all.

Ford refused to blame the individuals in more than a very limited degree. In the common phrase, it was the system that was wrong; and at the back of the system was the common way of thought of the mass of 'educated' people. It was unity of thought, he insisted, that was lacking; diversity of opinion was the chief practical obstacle to the carrying out of principles, and we made no study, educational or other, of the ways in which people of diverse opinions might arrive at a meeting of minds. Oriental minds had equally encountered an obstacle, and had found their unity in something little better than a common fatalism. Our resignation to the 'practical' difficulties that come of divided counsels had, curiously enough, the same taint of fatalism. 'The different forms of fatalism,' Ford remarked, 'are the blind alleys of spiritual evolution.'

I gathered from Mrs. Ford that some of these eminent acquaintances of his were really interested in his way of thought and anxious to see more of him; and perhaps a region of influence might have opened out before him, as Mr. Wishart hoped, if their deed had been as good as their will. But a busy official, however idealistic his private views, only admires a prophet or a philosopher on principle; he does not cultivate him in practice. He is committed to a way of life from which such indulgences are, in practice, crowded out. I do not think Ford was disappointed. He had seen enough for his present purposes of a type which he wanted to understand. He wanted now—he had been five months at home—to continue his voyaging, and particularly to visit China.

Ford's impressions of China, as they are recorded in the note-books (I shall have but little other record to adduce), are at once peculiarly rich and, if the paradox will be understood, peculiarly vague. They show more than anything else his real reason for wishing to see outlandish civilisations in being, not merely to read what other observers had written about them—the fact, of which he must have been unconsciously aware, that by living for a time in any society of people he could absorb, through the pores of his skin as it were, more of the true, essential explanation of their social ethic than the trained literary interpreter could express in many volumes. He told me once that he could learn more about the soul of Japan from one

slight story of Lafcadio Hearn's telling than from all the Japanese history that is extant, though Hearn is admittedly an inaccurate reporter; and I think the reason is that Hearn, like Ford, possessed a certain imaginative sympathy which could enter into direct communication with the inner social sense of a people, disregarding the multiplicity of detail that only obscures the vision of the more pedestrian if more painstaking investigator. At all events Ford's China, like Hearn's Japan, seems to me a real place, queer but intelligible; the China and the Japan of the careful European historian seem, by comparison, a fantastic myth. All of this goes to support a contention of Ford's that reality, for the mind, depends not upon facts in themselves, but upon the imaginative understanding of facts. Ford took in a few facts at first hand, and understood them, and arrived at a real interpretation of China; the historical commentators who had made a life's study of China gathered in many facts, chiefly at second or third hand, and did not understand them, and produced a Chinese fairy tale. But let me give another extract from the note-books :—

'The most exciting thing about this civilisation, from the modern European point of view, is that it has had no industrial revolution—not as an entire civilisation. India had; though the wind has been tempered to the Indian masses to a great extent. (Had Europe to bear the first and hardest brunt because Europe alone was so far advanced in strength as only to sag perilously,

not actually to break, under the onslaught?) Discounting the Oriental isolation of the unity ideal—the Oriental fatalism—China is what Europe was before steam and rails came in.

'*Hyp.* Suppose industrialism were now fully introduced into China, as into Japan, this would be the result: machinery, the whole complex mechanism of industrial relations, would come into being among a people whose way of thought, ingrained by centuries upon centuries of routine, would make them utterly incapable of interpreting it. They would not control the machine; the machine would control them. *And their fatalism would make it seem right to them that a machine should take on this supremacy.*

'Did anything so very different happen when industrialism made its swift conquest of Europe? We had our own fatalism—our belief in the absolute and sole necessity of individuation; and the Manchester School was the consequence. Let diversity of industrial interest have free play, we said; unity of interest will settle itself. In other words, let unity of industrial interest go hang. The Chinaman would say, in effect, This great Spirit of Machinery has taken hold of us and possessed us; it is no use for us, mere cogs in its wheels, to protest. In other words, let the working individual go hang. On this hypothesis the result in the two cases is curiously the same.

'*Conf.*[1] Factory workers in Nanchong seem to show

[1] Confirmation (of the hypothesis).

exactly the pessimism and the resignation of English sweated operatives. The difference is in the mode of relief: the Englishman takes gin and becomes, fallaciously, a free-born Briton again; the Chinaman takes opium and identifies himself with "the circumambient inane." To the one, a false individuation—to the other, a false sense of his unity with everything.

'(No—not wholly false. Stolen, rather; stolen from the man's inner consciousness. He is living, at these moments, upon his spiritual capital.)

'Compare Chinese peasantry, now, with English peasantry before the industrial revolution. Discounting the vast difference between their views of what is ultimately important, their life, in detail, is much of a muchness. The elementary fact that the people depend on the land, and the land on the people, is at the root of the people's contentment and the land's fecundity. Imagine the mass of Chinese peasantry swept into the industrial vortex, and you imagine an incalculable upheaval and uprooting. That upheaval and uprooting has *happened* to us; it is wonderful that we are not in a worse mess than we are.'

No specimen from Ford's note-books can render the cumulative effect that the whole mass of his notes has for me, who knew his way of thinking, and can see the relation between his small, subtly casual allusions and the general trend of his thought. The above quotation, now that I have copied it into my manuscript, seems

vague and purposeless out of its context—which is the haunting meaning that the whole body of his notes dimly conveys to me. The notes in themselves, as detailed excerpts, such as the two that I have given, have comparatively little meaning. Ford put these jottings down for his own eye—they were to be his raw material when he came to write his book, and he deliberately put them down in the raw. But perhaps the reader will have both the patience and the insight to see in them, at least, the movement of a mind that always looked through seemings to realities, and lived for the true concerns of life.

I make no attempt to portray Ford's impressions of India and China—those romantically picturesque civilisations—in their picturesque aspect. It was not that aspect that concerned him. He wanted to arrive at the truth about these civilisations as it affects, or should affect, our own idea of civilisation. I do not profess to give his conclusions; those he could only have worked out for himself. I only hope to give a hint, and a very slight hint, of his working. The tragedy is that he himself was not permitted to work out his conclusions in full.

He came home from China, as from India, not because material was exhausted—far from it—but because he seemed to have been long enough away. And he came back resolved to go out again, presently, to Japan—the country where East and West have met in an alliance closer and more baffling to the mind than

can be discovered in any other corner of the globe. 'Understand Japan,' he said to me, 'and you understand the whole of the modern world.' Japan, he went on to say, would probably show itself to be a crude mixture of Eastern and Western influences; but there one ought to see, not by any means a new and a perfected civilisation, but the embryo of a civilisation begotten by the West upon the East. He did not look to Japan as an ideal, but rather, almost, as an exemplary warning. It might be the privilege of the Japanese to show us all how not to do it; in any case, he meant to find out.

This time his stay in London was a short one—less than two months; and he gave all his time to his wife and children. It was only because he wanted to be with them again that he had come home. It is amusing that one of the friends who most deplored his absences abroad was highly scandalised at his extravagance in undertaking a journey home for so short a period. It was not that he could not afford it, nor even that he was spending Mrs. Ford's money—if it had been any business of his friends to speculate upon these questions—it was simply the uncomfortable sense of a disproportion between the length and cost of a journey home from the East and back and a stay in England of merely a few weeks. The value of those weeks was not to be measured by their number; and they were destined to be a very precious memory to those for whose sake he returned.

I saw Ford twice during this time ; and at our first meeting he was full of humorous comments upon his friend's letter of expostulation. It was part, he said, of the eternal discussion whether things are more square than they are pink. The expense of his journey represented one value ; the happiness of a domestic reunion represented another and a wholly different value, as different as the quality of pinkness is from the quality of squareness. People were for ever trying to measure incommensurable things against one another, especially to translate into terms of quantity things that can only be estimated in terms of quality. He said that he saw himself, during his stay in England, in the character of Lewis Carroll's engine-driver, whose time was worth a thousand pounds a minute. In his own case, the actual value of a minute or an hour or a day of his presence at home to himself, to his wife, to either of his children, was absolutely unmeasurable, even in terms of quality, by any one outside the family ; but when you had a value widely accepted and in a sense understood by the public, its expression in terms of quantity might be just as impossible. Ford adduced the case of a short poem in the evening paper which he had brought home with him, a little lyric in two four-line stanzas, full, he declared, of the true creative spirit. (The poet's name was unknown to me, as to Ford ; not long ago I came upon the verses again, in a volume now cherished by those who have a seeing eye for modern poetry, as the work of a master of

delicate fantasy in rhyme.[1]) Ford held out the sheet. 'What is this worth, in terms of quantity?' he asked. 'Fourpence a line—four eights are thirty-two—two and eight pence.' As to the real value in terms of quality, who could judge? The thrill of pleasure that it had given to us was a spark from the authentic fires of poetry; but, again, it might be a spark that would gleam for a little and die out, a small shooting star in an August sky, or it might be a new fixed star among the hosts in the poetic firmament, to be registered upon the charts of astronomer-critics of poetry for as long as word-constellations in our language should endure. In the lesser event, even, its value could be gauged by no quantitative foot-rule of any one's devising. 'The qualitative is the absolute,' said Ford; a saying upon which I have often reflected since this talk, and always with a feeling that Ford is tantalising me again—that a world of meaning lies behind the phrase, of meaning which Ford ought to have lived to elucidate more fully. At all events, I feel certain that the converse of his statement is true: that the quantitative is the impermanent—that anything which can be weighed and measured in terms of quantity is of its nature fleeting, and of its nature unsatisfying to the spirit of man. The quantitative is, by definition, the finite.

The second time that I saw Ford during this return to England, and the last time that I was to talk with

[1] Walter de la Mare.

him before his departure for Japan, was within a week of his sailing. I was preoccupied with my own concerns. I had the choice before me of two careers; the one ambitious, in the sense in which ambition means the seeking of money, the other artistic, in the sense in which art means the satisfaction of one's own inner needs. I laid my position—of which the details need not concern the reader—before Ford. The result of the otherwise unimportant incident was that Ford gave me his mind about the perennial conflict in the estimation of a youngish man between ideals and practical necessities, in terms which ought, I think, to be definitely stated and underlined, though the attempt to restate the principles that Ford could express and illustrate with such easy power is an undertaking full of difficulty.

To begin with, he insisted that all conflict between the ideal and the necessary is unnatural conflict. It is of the same nature as the opposition between the theoretical and the practical. None the less, that unnatural opposition, that unnatural conflict is continually present in our civilisation: we must never forget that it is there, but we must never forget that it is unnatural. Ford imagined as an instance the case of an artist, a literary man, who wants to write literature of one kind, while his agent or publisher, representing the public taste, wants him to write literature (if it be literature) of another kind. His artistic sense demands that he should write what he

wants to write, and his artistic sense is wrong, to this extent: it is also his business to say what other people want, or need, to have said. Real art is never born of the artistic sense alone; it springs from a fusion of the artistic with the social sense. Undoubtedly the artist often knows best, not what is merely wanted, but what is truly needed; but that is not because of his artistic sense alone, but because his social sense is often finer than that of his agent or publisher—in whom artistic and social ideals are alike merged in some degree in commercial considerations.

A writer, so Ford declared, has no need to compromise between his artistic conscience and the need for making money. Indeed, as a rule, he only falls between two stools if he tries to do so. What he needs is not a compromise, but a unity; and that not between art and money-making, but between art and an understanding of the people to whom the art must speak. Money-making must be incidental. 'If an artist tries to aim straight at money,' said Ford, 'he will miss it. The pull of his art will deflect his aim.'

Under the vague term 'artist' Ford tended to include all those who follow a given activity simply and solely for its own sake. The others were those who had fame or money for their chief objective. The desire for fame in itself—apart from the desire for recognition and love from those for whom one has worked—he regarded as a disease of the mind, instancing the number of great seekers after fame who

have been epileptics. A desire for money, on the other hand, was often worthy of entire respect. In a perfect civilisation, he said, we should all do our work for its own sake and for the sake of our neighbours, and our material reward would come incidentally; in civilisation as it is, the animal law of a struggle for existence is only very partially superseded, and most of the money that is the agreed token for food, shelter, and security is scrambled for rather than earned. This being so, Ford was clear that the element of scramble must be allowed for—and kept in its proper place. The trouble was, as Ford said, that there appeared to be a law of 'once a scrambler, always a scrambler'; the world might be roughly divided into scramblers, earners, and artists, all remaining fairly true to type.

The difficulty was to know when to stop scrambling. Almost every one had the right instinct about this; almost every one said to himself, 'I need so much for security; I will make so much and then stop.' And almost every one, succeeding in the money-scramble, found himself unable to stop. Ford put this down to two causes. First, 'scrambling' satisfies an instinct older than humanity, the instinct developed through æons of evolution through struggle; and the appetite of that instinct grows with exercise. Second, there is the difficulty of persuading the stopping-place to remain fixed. A man aims at a modest £300 a year. Starting from the basis of a very simple way of life, he sees £300 a year as, upon that basis, a comfortable

assurance of security. But unless he is a person of great simplicity, or of great determination and fixity of purpose, his basis, his scale of life, rises with every increase in his income; and when he has his £300 a year he is already living on a £300 a year basis, and thinks how pleasant it would be to feel really comfortable and secure—with an income of, say, £600 a year. And so the process goes on, without limit; and so Ford considered, it was likely to go on until society should take account of the sound instinct for moderation with which most people enter upon a money-making career, and should give it expression by setting a limit to wealth, thus protecting the individual against his own lower instincts.

This, I suggested, would abolish capitalism—would it not involve a mechanical State-Socialism? Possibly, Ford thought, not at all necessarily. Private ownership had had its use, he thought. The time had already come when an industry could be owned entirely by small shareholders and managed by salaried experts. Possibly, in the future, the workers would become the shareholders—and the shareholder class, through an education that would rouse the mass of the genteel out of idleness and apathy, would become workers as well. That, he was inclined to think, would be in the long run the solution of the industrial problem; but it would be a very long run. By that time industry would have become an art, and grab and scramble would have been quite superseded; a consummation desirable

enough in all conscience, but not likely to come about in a generation or two.

This was the last talk that I had with Ford. He sailed for Japan in the spring of 1913. For some weeks after his landing there his letters were dispatched regularly every mail, as usual; and as usual they told Mrs. Ford of little but his actual movements—he was never a descriptive letter-writer, and he seldom mentioned the progress of his investigations, keeping this material for his note-books and for conversation when he should return. He seldom wrote to any one but his wife, and, occasionally, his elder girl; and he wrote rather as husband and father than as traveller and thinker. Mrs. Ford allows me to publish a part of one brief letter, which has only the sad distinction of being his last :—

> 'This is a quiet little up-country village. I have got all that I can hold for the present out of the towns and the English-speaking Japs, and I want to get the atmosphere of the un-Europeanised rustic life. Doing without an interpreter already, with results that strain the splendiferous native courtesy at times. Jolly quarters, with a fine view—I 'm seeing plenty of it, being tied by the leg with a chill of sorts—getting better now, after a couple of days' fever. I really wished you were here the day before yesterday ! . . .'

After this letter, silence. Ford had always written

by every mail, and when two mails had passed with no further word from him, Mrs. Ford was anxious enough to have word sent, provisionally, to the British Consul at Tokyo, asking that inquiries might be made unless a cable from her should have let him know meanwhile that all was well. Still no news arriving, she cabled to the consul on the day when the information sent by mail was due to reach him, asking that inquiries should be pushed forward without delay. There followed another fortnight of suspense, and then the answering cable arrived. Ford had died and had been buried several weeks before in the little village from which he had last written.

Confirmatory details by the mail following the cable told little more. The foreign visitor had been stricken down by a fever, had rallied strongly, and then had had a quick and fatal relapse. The village people had guarded his few possessions, and these were being sent home. (Ultimately only his pocket-book, sent separately by registered mail, arrived; the thing of most value, the notes that he had had time to make in Japan, were lost with the main consignment, no one could tell how.) There was no hint of any final note or message; at Mrs. Ford's request the envoy from the Consulate made a second journey to the village to make sure of this, and learned that Ford had passed from a return of high fever into unconsciousness, from which he did not awaken.

I believe that Ford died with many secrets locked,

half-solved, in his mind, many half-worked problems whose solution would have brought him widespread gratitude among thinking people. It is part of my sorrow to be able to present only so slight and vague a hint even of the nature of the great undertaking in the midst of which he was cut off. This was to have been the practical outcome, the practical service, of his essential philosophy, his essential view of man and of the universe. Of that philosophy itself, so far as Beresford and I have been able to reconstruct it from our memory of his casual expositions (Beresford was fortunate in having one really exhaustive talk with him about it), the next chapter will give some account. Of the man I will attempt no concluding panegyric; the memory of his inner nature is the sacred possession of those who have lost him.

PART III

A FEW NOTES ON FORD'S PHILOSOPHY

By J. D. Beresford

CHAPTER XI

I remind and I are in disagreement concerning what appears to be an essential of Ford's philosophy, but I believe that our very quarrel demonstrates the validity of the principle that provides my thesis. Richmond loved Ford the man. He admired the structure of Ford's character and the rule of his life. Richmond saw results and found an application; he was satisfied as to the pragmatic test of the philosophy, and while he would not for a moment admit that pragmatism is a philosophy in itself, he has found in it a useful tool. Just in so far as our present partnership is concerned he represents the active exponent. It is he who has written Ford's life, who has had some vision of a technology and has translated his subject into comprehensible terms. My share, as represented in this final chapter, imposes upon me a task that must be less sympathetic to the ordinary reader.

And I must premise, further, that I cannot attempt a dogmatic exposition of Ford's philosophy. He never himself formulated it in philosophical terms, and although I may lapse into that shorthand from a characteristic inability to find the illuminating paraphrase, I propose

to confine myself as far as possible to the instrument of common language understood by the plain man. Ford had the same difficulty. I have before me at this moment a letter that he wrote to me when I was living at Parkstone in the summer of 1905, and I quote a passage here as the true apology for my method. 'I am confoundedly bothered by my search for terms,' he writes apropos of the philosophical consolation he was prescribing for my mental depression, 'and I don't want to sit down and invent a new terminology. So you must be sympathetic with me and not allow the prejudice of old associations to bias you if you find me talking of "spirit" and "matter," for example. I shall only be using them as convenient little labels like the placards of the Elizabethan stage.'

It follows therefore, firstly, that my statement will be of no value to the specialist; and secondly, that I may have received a faulty impression of F philosophy, and may pass on a second rend will be still more distorted. This resort of pictures, the language so sedu definition by the academic ph touches too various a respon different readers. When s a Castle,' the averag to his experience, a own construction last excursi ngraving,

as I, too, may have substituted Windsor for For
Kenilworth, and may succeed in nothing more th
creating the impression of a drop scene, I feel cautiou
inclined to warn all whom it may concern that
exegesis, no less than my personal impression of
philosopher himself, is coloured by my own tendenci

Lastly, the problem is still more complicated by
fact that Ford's main proposition is as pure an ess
in *a priorism* as I ever came across. When he fi
began to hint at his philosophy to me, in 1904, he h
not read Bergson; but he had completely anticipa
the method of intuition prescribed in the *Introd*
tion to Metaphysics. Hence his p ry thesis
founded on no sort of in pr ay app
at first sight to cont pragma
tests of social bene

But my apolo d the li
of necessity; a add
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when he ranged beyond the last-known fence of molecular physics, he implied a theory of impeded, temporarily crystallised force as the ultimate atom. I remember receiving an impression of the 'knot in the ether,' in unmaterial terms, as force confined by its own superabundance of energy, as some indefinable element piling up to visibility. But as I attempt to translate the intuition the matter inevitably becomes temporal and spatial, and it seems that no other figure is possible.

Nevertheless, I believe that we are approaching some expression of that hypothecated urgency behind life. The academic philosophers have had their uses. They have trained the mind to dissociate itself from the concrete example. And if no academic philosophy has yet succeeded in formulating any idea of a 'first cause,' many philosophers have helped us to clear the field of thought.

I like to think that we are feeling our way to a new form in this kind. Bergson has failed us in many respects, but he has come nearer than any writer of my generation to carry the statement of his thesis into the domain of poetry. His work has, in fact, what Mr. Ransome would call a potential value. Behind many of his passages in *Creative Evolution* lies a power of suggestion that is more valuable than the logical demonstration. And it is for this reason that all his many exegetes have failed to do more than confuse our hopeful vision of his principles. Bergson's logic

carries us no further than the logic of Hegel, but Bergson's statement tends to display a new possibility. When logic and mathematics and the language of accuracy can carry us no further, poetry, music, and even the graphic arts may complete the expression.

So, too, in these haphazard notes on Ford's theory of causation, I can only hope to convey some vague, embracing impression of that postulated first cause which has found such other names and such other significances as God, the First Cause, the Life Force, the Elan Vital, or, as I unthinkingly put it, the urgency behind life—a definition that I should be sorry to defend philosophically. I use it, now, neither poetically nor scientifically, but because it satisfied my need as I wrote it, and I hope that it may by its very vagueness and inaccuracy serve my purpose of avoiding the over definite.

To Ford this urgency was all 'good' in the sense that it was beyond criticism in its essence, however various in expression; and his first and most important principle was that right thinking, judgment and action are attained only by permitting the freest possible expression of the tendencies that seek to manifest themselves as a liberation of this antecedent urge.

In the parable of force piling itself up till it becomes comprehensible as matter, we find our Ormuzd in liberation, our Ahriman in impediment or constriction. So in the moral analogy, free expression presents an aspect of right; judgment and inhibition an aspect

of wrong. Consequently, right and wrong are never absolutes, but only degrees of resistance.

It follows as a kind of corollary to this that each check or impediment to the free expression of this active urgency behind life remains temporarily as a further complex that must ultimately be resolved. I remember that on one occasion Ford took up the old analogy of the river, postulating that one must not think of the current as a movement of particles, but as an abstract force thrusting forward, a force that must not be confused in this instance with any physical theory of gravity. In that metaphor the impediments took the shape of the whirlpools and eddies, and for a time he elaborated the figure and made me see how each vortex must be resolved, each resistance overcome, by the ultimate force of a stream of energy that could be momentarily diverted but never, even momentarily, checked. I had a fleeting vision of some eternal persistence whose direction and temporality could only be measured by the ephemeral whirlpool it created. And then Ford dismissed the whole metaphor with one sweeping movement of his arm. 'It 's just one figure out of a million,' he said ; 'the only point of it is to show that any figure one may choose has the same interpretation.'

But if that remark of his is true, it does, indeed, contain some element of proof. If we can find evidence of the same theory in every material illustration, we may logically accept the theory on the mere ground of

probability; we are in sight of a hypothesis that explains all the phenomena.

In a somewhat inconsequent series of notes such as this, anything like a general argument would be out of place. I can only suggest and leave the immense range of extensions and objections to those who are willing to work in the cause of truth. Nevertheless, I must pause for a moment to point out that in certain applications Ford's general theory does help us to plainer statement.

The theological problem of the origin of evil, for example, is resolved into simpler terms. Ex hypothesi, this primitive urge is non-moral, and whatever appears to us as evil is only an instance of a degree of temporary impediment. On the other hand, if we push the problem further back, and inquire whence came the first hindrance, whence the original superfluity that became translated into matter, we may find some explanation and satisfaction in the contemplation of our principle as at once rhythmic and eternal. We may think of it as some immeasurable wave that pulses for ever, without origin or climax; and we, the infinitely small presentation of a human resultant, may find ourselves at a node of accumulation, buoying ourselves with the certainty of a heaven of present expansion.

For the amplitude of our imagined wave is so vast that it may contain the birth, growth, and dissolution of a universe. In one great throb of our single element,

matter may come into being, pass through its myriad forms of presentation and dissolve again into the serenity of the All-thing that is, in its essence, immutable. No conception of our material time is great enough to measure such a cycle.[1] Our little measure of revolution about a central sun must be so indefinitely multiplied that the human mind must forget that unit before the larger conception can be realised. And if the unit grow to the passing of a solar system, it is still too small to reckon the comparative eternity of a single movement of our primary element. Yet now, and with one effortless turn of the imagination, the reckoning can be made if we do but grasp the thought that by its extension all time may be eliminated; drowned in the greater infinity as the thought of a single second is drowned in the conception of a million years. That is as far, perhaps, as we may reach towards our elimination of the concept of time, while we are still so confronted and harassed by this perpetual cage of matter. But if the method fail to achieve its ultimate object, namely, the complete elimination of the time measure, it may serve, as philosophy has served, to dissociate the mind from a concrete example.

Indeed I would find my excuse for this picture-language in a continual clash of metaphor. If a single

[1] I write the word 'cycle' deliberately, since in this relation I may change the metaphor without apology. The figure is inessential. The All-thing embraces every form, while for ever remaining itself formless.

image is chosen and elaborated, it tends to crystallise as the idea in itself. But if we have no sooner pictured a stream than we find the thought of it changed to a wave, to a wheel, to a measure of time, we have some hope of momentarily touching the abstract as a result of our confusion. Just in this manner do our thoughts often reach out more profoundly when a demand is made upon our immediate attention. In conversation, while we are reading, in the midst of some active employment, the vividly enticing idea will often present itself, and we long for instant freedom in order that the idea may be wooed to fuller expression. But when the distraction is removed, when we have escaped it may be our companion or even quickly laid down our book, some magic is gone from our thought, the wonder slips from us, and that which had been for a moment vital and entrancing becomes the flat simulacrum projected by a labouring imagination.

And for this reason I have a hope that among the torturing clash of metaphors, the mind of the reader may find some moment of escape; and approach, if only for the tiniest instant, the idea of that shapeless, timeless abstraction which was Ford's intuition of the primary urge behind life.

I come to a second application of his theory—and it shall be my only other instance—by way of the problem of evolution.

When the theologists presented our element in the shape of God, and gave Him the human qualities of

pity, mercy, and gentleness, they were sorely hampered to explain the apparent cruelty not only of that expression we have labelled Nature, but also of the incongruous tragedies of human fate. By one of those convincing fallacies which have something in common with my sliding metaphors of the All-thing, they came to postulate that the ways of God were inscrutable, while attempting still to retain those essentially scrutable characteristics of pity and mercy with which they had anthropomorphically endowed him. God became to us, therefore, a horrible paradox of cruel kindness, and from that our puzzled imaginations were reduced to contemplating human sin as a kind of Absolute that might perhaps be eliminated by punishment. The thought of our own abasement gave a more plausible colour to the inscrutable fury of God. If we could attain no such high conception of His purity as should elevate Him beyond all possibility of criticism, we might reach towards the same effect by lowering our measure of human virtue. The older theologists sought, in fact, to approve God by debasing the standard of their regard of Him.

Ford, in all his tests of the All-thing, steadily refused to humanise it. Cruelty no less than kindness was to him a mode of motion, a function, a phenomenon, that we judge by the present standard of humanity in a particular stage of evolution. He found no absolute criterion in any of these qualities. Right and wrong were relatives of immediate worth, but they had for

him no such intrinsic qualities as marked them out for ultimate permanence. Indeed, if I were asked to state his absolutes in this kind, I could only label them as Obstruction and Liberation—a definition that I will consider later when I come to the question of his practical ethic.

And it seems to me that if we regard the large problem of evolution from this attitude, all those vague questions concerning waste and superfluity, the apparent regard for the type, and the reckless cruelty to the individual; all those queries of purpose and morality which strain towards an acceptable teleology, become suddenly futile or incapable of an immediate solution. I do not find Ford's primitive urge inscrutable if I cease to regard it as the creation of a human mind. The All-thing is not made in man's image, and man is no more than a mode of expression for the All-thing. And if with our limitations we seek some definite hope, some goal at which we may momentarily gaze in this flitting instant of our long journey, we may find it in newer words than Heaven and Hell; in such words as obstruction and liberation, or in the thought of a passage from conflict towards peace.

But all the particular problems connected with man's present moral, intellectual, and physical condition will surround us when we leave the freedom of our unlocateable *a priori* standpoint and look back at our insurgent premiss through the circumscriptions of that empirical pragmatism which appears to be the

accepted criterion of social values. There is, indeed, another criterion, and, perhaps, a more important one, I mean the intuitions of that genius which is the gift in a greater or less degree of all humanity. But for what we call practical purposes, every inspiration that touches the regulations of social life must be submitted to the final test of 'Will it work?' In the temporal, spatial domain which encloses the material complex in a delicate, strong net of very urgent restrictions, it is inevitable that we should attach a considerable importance to the more orderly arrangement of molecules.

Before I come to those immediate concerns of life, however, I must deal briefly with an intermediate problem arising out of the main premiss and subsidiary to it; a problem that leaves us still outside the net. Ford's second *a priori* proposition deals with the subject of consciousness.

His statement differs most importantly from the statements of such philosophers as, say, William James, inasmuch as Ford touches a greater unity. James spoke of an 'ocean of consciousness,' and either that or any other metaphor of the same kind presents the antinomies of 'spirit' and 'matter'—even if the matter, as James seemed to imply, is held in suspension. Ford did not haggle over degrees of permeability. He postulated consciousness as a universal property of what we call matter; and drew his differentiating line, not between consciousness and unconsciousness, but

between consciousness and the potentiality for its realisation.

At first sight his theory of that scale of potentiality may appear as nothing more than a piece of ingenuity, but when the theory is put to the widest test of analogy, it gains immense force by the appeal of its application. Ford's key-word in this connection was 'Reciprocity.' He postulated that the degree of realisation necessary for the understanding of what we speak of broadly as consciousness, is proportionate to the degree of reciprocity between the units of consciousness. (I deplore the material significance of the word 'unit,' but each and every synonym is open to the same objection. We have, unfortunately, no comprehensible language with which to measure such abstractions as this; and 'unit' has the advantage of carrying less suggestion of solidity than such alternatives as molecule or atom.)

For the sake of illustration our unit may be figured as some minimum translation of the omnipresent thrust into spatial expression. We might, indeed, express it by an algebraical formula, for, when we enter the net, the chief of our restrictions is imposed by a fundamental mathematical process working within three or at most four dimensions; a restriction that is imposed upon all would-be definitive language. We may, however, accept the word 'unit' as a reasonably flexible description.

It is far harder to attempt a definition of 'reciprocity,' a word that in this connection includes and

correlates a whole host of values. It must, I think, include love for example at one end, while at the other it might express the mechanical relations of the transmitter and receiver of a Marconi apparatus. We may, perhaps, hold the idea of reciprocity as a potential function of the unit, and find instances of the function in phenomena apparently so diverse as telepathy and chemical affinities.

Ford's main premiss with regard to consciousness now emerges as the postulate that the tendency of all the known manifestations of reciprocity was towards the realisation of consciousness. He sometimes found a statement of his antinomies in this proposition by using the chemical terms crystalloid and colloid, the former representing the more static, and the latter the more fluid forms of cohesion. And in this figure he further assumed that the static represented the more obstructive complex, while the fluid was the more susceptible instrument that was evolving more rapidly towards the ideal of expression.

Nevertheless, in this as in his figures of the primitive urge behind life, all statements must be accepted as presenting a material analogy which cannot be pressed too far. And later, when I come to his theory of 'tenuity' in connection with what is commonly called genius, I shall have occasion to elaborate, by a more biological parallel, the peculiar application of such symbols as 'crystalloid' and 'colloid'; symbols that stood to him as portraying the increasing diversity

between the inorganic and the organic forms of life. For the immediate purpose of these notes, however, I shall accept the main argument as having been stated in the formula I have adopted, and proceed to an explanatory illustration of the theory with no further apology for any abrupt transition of metaphor. Two terms, alone, will remain constant, namely that of 'unit' and that of 'reciprocity,' both of which have been, in some sense, defined.

An illustration of Ford's that gave me a sense of apprehension, when I first tentatively struggled with his exposition of consciousness, took for its unit the high exponent of individual life. The thing we know as a group consciousness, he said, does very evidently depend on the degree of reciprocity between individuals. But beyond the small group we come to a still more imperfect form in a national consciousness; while a world consciousness can hardly be said to exist. The differences being fairly attributable to the diminishing potentiality for reciprocity.

In the small, more or less *selected* group, for example, such as the congregation of a revivalist preacher, the sitters at a spiritualistic *séance*, or the crowd at a public meeting, a temporary degree of reciprocity is attained by the attention given to a central theme. The individual surrenders himself in a greater or less degree to the exhortation of the preacher, to the thought of the common desire to witness some psychical phenomenon, or to the considered statement of the

public speaker. This surrender connotes a form of free expression, which in Ford's argument is the continual tendency of his primal force, and as a result of the temporary failure of opposition, a higher form of reciprocity becomes immediately possible, a form that is manifested as the passing phenomenon of a group consciousness. In the larger instance of the national consciousness, the common subject of attention must obviously be wider in scope, an instance of which will inevitably occur to any one in this period of the present war.

Now, it will probably be urged that this manifestation of the higher consciousness is open to criticism on ethical grounds. The temporarily-created revivalist and psychic emotions will be condemned by the materialist; the public crowd's emotion by its political opponents; the fighting emotion by the pacifist. And all these condemnations can be upheld by a perfectly sound pragmatic argument based upon the values of social benefit. But Ford overrode all such considerations as these in his statement of the broad theory. He urged that the pragmatic test was no more applicable in this connection than the charge of cruelty levied against an omniscient God. The phenomenon was too temporary and too various in its expression to be bottled for future use, and the only test we could apply, he suggested, was the test of potentiality. And as to that, there cannot, I think, be two opinions. The common emotion which animates

a crowd to a momentary union, may be judged by some passing standard as useless or positively harmful; but it is an immensely powerful and effective force. And when such a common emotion has been maintained in the furtherance of a common purpose sacred to a particular group, the power evolved has been demonstrated as capable of radically changing the political, social, or religious conditions of a continent.

Another symbol for the enlargement of consciousness might be taken from the *Life of the Bee*. Maeterlinck became aware of some immaterial entity that he called the 'Spirit of the Hive'; but less poetical, less intuitive minds have been driven to the same kind of resort to explain the appearance of an unincorporated consciousness arising from a certain degree of reciprocity between sufficiently sensitive units. In this instance of the bees more particularly, and to a less degree in other examples of gregarious life (the law of the wolf-pack will serve as another type), the perfect submission of the unit seems to be the prime essential for the expression of a group consciousness—a deduction which so continually faced Ford that he later built upon it his theory of social philosophy. Nevertheless, a very clear distinction must be drawn between purposive and motiveless submission, using both expressions in relation to a quality of deliberateness exercised by the unit, and not in any sense as denoting the result achieved by the immanent will, which,

according to Ford's definition, could have no deliberate purpose as we commonly regard it.

The precise quality of this attention or submission cannot possibly be defined in the present state of our knowledge; though I find in the general attitude another statement of Bacon's apophthegm that Nature can only be commanded by obeying her. When Ford first began to talk his philosophy to me, I received an impression of some vaguely pictured force or purpose 'coming through'; and although I rather deprecate the slightly theological suggestion of that phrase, it has a certain applicability in some relations. But, indeed, a whole range of metaphors drawn from physics would portray the outline of the same figure. Any sympathetic vibration illustrates an aspect of reciprocity and at the same time the appearance of the new phenomenon which inevitably arises out of any demonstration of union.[1] And it may well be that in different regions, a common chemical experiment, the swarming of the hive, and the expression of a national impulse, are but unimportant variants of the same simple theme. Again, my chief point is the wideness of the analogy rather than the applicability of a single instance. In expounding his theory of consciousness or his theory of causation, Ford sought to carry out an underlying principle by hinting and suggesting

[1] Browning said the same thing when he wrote, of a musician, that out of three sounds he framed,

'Not a fourth sound, but a star.'

rather than by the exposition of dogma. For, as I hope to show later, the plasticity of the human mind illustrates a symptomatic condition in this relation.

Lastly, before I leave these tentative notes on the subject of consciousness, I feel that I must make some reference to those aspects of apparent negation illustrated by the phenomena of sleep and death. No physiological explanation of the former condition has yet been universally accepted, but there would seem to be a trend of opinion in favour of believing that 'natural' death, or death from old age, is attributable broadly to some form of physical crystallisation. 'Natural' death, in fact, presents no real difficulty in this connection, displaying, perhaps, an instance of cumulative physical obstruction which finally ceases to convey the primitive urge behind life. Death from any other known cause is attributable to a like failure of reciprocity between the units of the body, however different the accident which determines the immediate agent. The result in every case is the passing from a comparative unison to a more or less absolute individualisation. Obviously the primal units of consciousness are for physical purposes indestructible; but their separation connotes a cessation of the group consciousness; just as the dispersal of the members of the hive would connote the disappearance of that collaboration which Maeterlinck has described as a spirit, and which has, indeed, a recognisable entity.

Sleep comes into quite another category, and I find

no inspiration in the poetic figure which likens it to a little death. Personally I incline to the view that there is no cessation of consciousness either during natural sleep or during the failure of objective response evidenced by a subject under an anæsthetic. The difference to my mind is one of manifestation. It is what I have earlier termed 'the potentiality for realisation' that has inexplicably fallen. And if I am unwillingly compelled to leave that 'inexplicably' confronting me with the blank negation of the insoluble, I find consolation in the thought that this problem belongs rather to the domain of the physiologist with his collaborators the physicist and the chemist, than to that of the philosopher. Since, to wind up this section of the general contention, it must, I think, be quite clear by this that the consciousness of Ford's premiss denotes a different concept from the 'awareness' of current philosophy. 'The spirit of the hive,' for example, has been used as a type of group consciousness, but it is impossible to postulate it as a form of awareness attributable to any individual.

When I first began to discuss philosophy with Ford, he shaped for me a little allegory designed as a bridge to lead over my hesitating thought from the practical application of my starting point to the unexplored region of the abstract in which I was then such a groping stranger. I used to call that allegory of his 'the visitor story.' It was to me in those days a

method by which I achieved distraction; and such was the frequent use I made of it that presently the story changed its function and I came to use it for the return instead of the outward journey. And I propose, now, to revert to that old allegory as a means of re-entering the net of material life. I have, indeed, to recast the form in which the story was given to me; and I admit that in my new version little if anything remains of Ford's original intention. He gave me a way of escape from the throng of immediate worries which beset me at that time, and I found an intellectual refuge whence I was able to survey, a little drunkenly, perhaps, the limitations of my ordinary life. And in reversing the process, I lose more than the purpose of an anodyne, since I lose, also, the characteristic attitude of Ford himself. As I have used it here, the 'visitor story' must not be made a criterion of Ford's personal philosophy.

The essential symbol of the allegory hovers about that ability for abstraction which I once gained from steadily regarding myself as a visitor to this planet. This ability is a common possession of ours, and the knowledge has weighed more with me than any argument in favour of immortality. We are aware of two worlds, as we are aware of two (or more ?) selves; and just as I am able to hold a controversial and even a heated duologue between myself and me, so am I able to take an objective or a subjective standpoint. The ability to do these things varies no doubt with the

individual, but in every one the power is there, and may be developed by use much as our physical co-ordinations may be developed.

But, now, I am not leaving the common experience of life, but returning to it ; and I want to set out, as lucidly as I may, the aspects of approach.

All that had been accepted as the conventional appearance of life is become new and strange during the interval of absence. Language, the laws of civilised society, the restrictions of social intercourse, all the mechanical ordinances that have served to check free expression, are seen as brief artificial devices that enclose the minds of man in a brittle, imperfect cage. This picture-language of ours, for example, this language that in its highest form achieves poetry not by direct statement but by delicate suggestion of that for which we have no symbol, is built almost exclusively from the metaphors of objective everyday experience. But coming as a visitor, I must tediously learn some set of imperfect figures in order that I may communicate with a few of my fellow-visitors, although I may never know them by that mechanical intercourse, nor can they recognise me. We are like children exchanging gifts. We hope that our little offering of words may be accepted as a pledge ; but I know not what my fellow-child is seeking in return for his offering, which I, on my part, may despise. Even acceptance is no evidence of understanding. If I offer that for which I find such symbols

as love, devotion or friendship, I may never know by any further interchange of these toys of language how gratefully my offering has been received. Love takes little heed of words.

And in lesser matters than this, language has little power to express, say, honesty of intention. In business we are forced to write our symbols on paper as an earnest that may be submitted to an arbitrary court of justice whose affair it is to translate the formula into action, by the explicit or implicit threat of punishment. So much easier is it to conceal than to display our intentions by this queer mechanism of intercourse.

When we are in the midst of objective life, the language we laboriously acquire soon appears as a comprehensible, even as a highly convenient, form of exchange; but the approaching visitor views it with foreboding and dismay.

And what is true of language is equally true of custom, a secondary but indeed a still more terrifying mechanism. Presently, when I have definitely entered the spatial and temporal realm which so nearly shuts me in from any sight of reality, I shall accept custom as a rigid and essential ordinance built upon the experience of the generations. The laws and conventions of a little group of visitors—by inclining the development of some common factor towards a formula for reciprocity within the confines of a similar language—will so bind me for a time that I may come to regard these

temporary rules as inspired ordinances framed by the disciplinarian God who is the ideal representative of the particular race I have fortuitously visited.

Again, I shall find comfort and entertainment within this little cage [1] of matter ; I shall find ideals of success and personal happiness ; worst of all I shall encourage obstinate antagonisms against my fellow-men, forgetting that they, too, are visitors no less than I.

I pause for an instant, already partly entangled, wondering, debating. Is it possible, I ask, for me to remember my vision of matter from without ? All these vast knots and intricacies terrify me by their massive threat of obstruction. I may not forget, but I shall soon be groping in a tangled web of endless restraints. And the only means of stating and holding my remembrance will be this queer, clumsy language that has no words for the thing I struggle to remember.

Two endowments alone are conferred upon me, intuition and imagination—neither of them definable save by such gross and clumsy metaphor as leaves them still inviolable. . . .

. . . . . .

An analysis of Ford's, concerned with social values, that left a particular impression on my mind, sprang from a discussion of ours on the subject of unselfishness ; and this subject provides such an admirable

[1] Sometimes I see it as a cage, at others as a net; neither figure is important, but I appreciate a distinction which marks a difference of mood. The use of the word net comes with a certain restive uneasiness of mind, and cage is the more optimistic simile.

approach to the whole question of motive that I cannot do better than attempt a summary of our general conclusions under that head. I say *our* conclusions, for I certainly believed at the time that I contributed valuable material to the argument; but Ford had a way of avoiding credit for any originality, and it is quite probable that all my share was elicited by his suggestions.

We began by the premiss that 'unselfishness' was a conscious self-denial, or self-expression, exercised in order to gain some ulterior object which might or might not be consciously realised. This is, of course, a version of the old statement that pure unselfishness is inconceivable, since some personal reward inevitably follows an act of denial, even although such reward may be nothing more than a vague awareness of ethical consolation that will crown the physical inhibition. The generalisation is one of considerable cogency, and has often led to the conclusion that 'unselfishness' is only a relative term indicating a degree of capacity for immediate self-forgetfulness.

Ford took that deduction a step further by postulating that unselfishness could never become a true virtue until it could be described as absolutely selfish, not in motive but in expression. If a friend of mine is ill, he said, and I sit up with him—an act of self-denial that causes me, let us suppose, considerable physical inconvenience—I am obviously being relatively selfish if I stay with him, because I hope to gain

the reward of my own approval. And this relative selfishness is a thing which we have agreed on general grounds to disapprove, at least for the purposes of this argument. But if I sit up with my friend because my feeling for him is such that I cannot bear to leave him, the act takes quite a different colour. Obviously I appear in this case to serve nothing but my own desires.

Such was Ford's general example, but coming to it, now, with the deliberate criticism of one who attempts to enunciate a clear proposition, I find that half a dozen contingents have yet to be reconsidered. When I listened to Ford, I followed his thought rather than his actual words, but I cannot expect that the prejudiced reader—and nearly all readers are necessarily prejudiced—will take for granted the various steps which I intuitively leaped.

In this example, then, certain inevitable misconceptions must be cleared away before I can suggest the ideal that cannot be absolutely defined. In this act of what we have called pure selfishness, no account can be taken of any future satisfactions that may presently arise. Assuming that the devotion is mine, I do not, for instance, look for my friend's gratitude, so it may be further postulated that he is unconscious and will never learn the part I have played in nursing him. Again, I am not intent on saving him in order that I may continue to enjoy his company in the future. We must, in short, eradicate any aspect of human, personal advantage whether immediate or anticipated,

whether actively realised or completely subconscious. What remains is as difficult of analysis as the 'dog's temper' of the Red Queen's classic example, the sublime and the ridiculous being nothing more than differences of presentation. We may, in fact, say that my 'temper' (in its right sense) is postulated as the sole motive force in the 'unselfish' act adduced; that what may appear to the introspective as an instance of self-denial is, indeed, the effortless, motiveless expression of my love for a friend. The nearest recognisable parallel to such a form of expression must be found in the act of a man in a consuming rage, or, better still, perhaps, in the fury of a madman. It is essential to fix the attention on the thought of pure spontaneity, avoiding at the same time all the difficult suggestions that have come to haunt the word instinctive.

Now, if this concept can be reached by intuition, it will resolve our terms of 'selfishness' and 'unselfishness' into an incongruous relativity. Both terms are practical, logical, and material, dealing, in effect, with some physical or spiritual bargain. They connote deliberation and effort, even if the primary impulse be so sudden as to appear spontaneous and the reward be so vaguely imagined as to seem valueless as a stimulant. In either case both deliberation and effort must inevitably appear during the long night watch of our example.

On the other hand, the effortless, motiveless expression of our intuition has no limit of duration, and

is independent of any translation into act, just as it is beyond the reach of our personal recognition. Before I can appreciate my own performance, the true expression must have ceased. To label the emotion with a cliché which has a valuable if incomplete significance, I lose myself in the thought of my friend.

Regarded from the practical, material standpoint, this pure expression of love, or longing, may appear to fail at the first moment of introspection. Directly I pause, as it were, in my long night watch and begin to probe my own motive, I seem to become again the selfishly unselfish creature of the first example. This difficulty, however, is only apparent, since the pause for introspection indicates a temporary failure of expression and not a cessation of the true impulse. Any distraction, such as a moan of pain from our unconscious sufferer, will immediately dissipate the interrupting force of the introspective mind, and once more permit the free effusion of our motiveless longing. That longing might perhaps be compared in this instance with any physical force, inferentially continuous but intermittently exhibited according to the potentiality or condition of the material agent. The force itself neither ceases nor varies in kind, but the least diversion of the recording instrument is sufficient to interrupt the manifestation. The power is cut off, the agent temporarily depolarised.

If this instance be accepted, it must be taken as stating a very important premiss with regard to the

fundamental ethic of all human actions, inasmuch as the instance assumes an extraneous impulse that will be manifested whenever the human condition is such as to permit free expression. Assuming this premiss, then, for the sake of argument, we come at once to the important consideration of conduct and morality in relation to ultimate development.

Ford died before Clutton Brock's book, *The Ultimate Belief*, was published, but it seems to me that there is in that work a tendency, not quite clearly expressed, to formulate one aspect of Ford's philosophy. Mr. Brock takes a leap—not, in my opinion, quite justifiable as yet—and assumes that the 'extraneous impulse' of our illustration works altogether for what we call good. Ford would, I know, have agreed in principle, but he would have postulated that this goodness is not of the kind that would at the present time be, without exception, recognised as morality. He admitted two extreme types, that may be classified as the free and the inhibited—neither ever attaining complete development—and while he asserted that the free was the ideal and the inhibited the stunted condition, he constantly warned me that the condition of freedom was one that was amazingly deceptive. I must, however, state my terms more broadly before I come to the question of stipulations. And since it is the easier of the two, and a definition of the contrasted condition arises out of it by implication, I will take inhibition as the first subject.

Now, in the first place, it is essential to find some means of distinguishing inhibition from self-control, in order to clear away the suspicion which would otherwise inevitably arise, that Ford intended to portray ideal humanity as an automaton, reacting to some agency it could not comprehend. The main difference between these two human abilities much resembles the difference between courage and fear. The man who faces and conquers temptation displays self-control; the man who runs away from a temptation displays an aspect of inhibition. If I say that I will not permit myself to think of a sex longing and by an effort of will deliberately and, apparently, successfully thrust the whole subject of sex relations into some secret chamber of my mind, I commit an act of fear. I admit that my longing is so strong that I dare not face it. Nevertheless, because the word inhibition has been so freely used by the psychologists and the medical profession to describe a normal act of self-control, it is as well to throw all the specialised meanings of the word into the category of what might be called ' morbid ' inhibitions. This category would, in my opinion, include any act of self-suppression that had a quality of fear. I see inhibition in my own thought, as being in the nature of a convulsive clenching. It is a shutting out, a closing of the mind, a cowering and a denial of that which sanity demands that we should affirm. Of the physiological effects of such morbid inhibitions I need say nothing here.

The psycho-analysts have demonstrated that this convulsive clenching of the mind almost invariably leads to some form of hysteria, a condition that may often be cured when the cramp of the original act is, as it were, released by confession. But the moral effect is far more dangerous, and in one sense it may be said to be contagious, since the inhibited frequently come to a morbid admiration for their own ineffectual morality and preach it to an ignorant congregation.

I may, perhaps, come to a wider view of the many aspects of 'morbid' inhibition by considering a somewhat bizarre illustration. Ford was familiar with the works of Freud and Jung and had met some of the practical exponents of the theory of psycho-analysis in London; and it was while he and I were discussing this theory that he gave me the instance I am about to describe. He had begun by severely criticising the limitations Freud had imposed upon himself by referring all forms of hysteria to a sexual complex, and came from that to a sudden and startling dictum by saying that the party politician was one of the finest instances of the inhibited mind. At first I understood him to mean the actual representative or member; but he told me that he believed the greater number of members and certainly all those who had risen to high place were free from the peculiar obliquity he had in mind. He touched on that aspect of the House of Commons which presents it as the 'best club in London,' and confessed his belief that it was very rare for any

well-informed member of the Government to be the blind adherent of a particular policy. They adopt a label, he said, both for public convenience and purposes of private ambition; but it is quite incredible that any clear-sighted man should persistently and conscientiously vote 'Liberal' or 'Conservative' on any measure before the House. He then explained that his instance of the inhibited referred rather to the typical middle- and upper-class voter.

Since that conversation—it must have taken place, I think, in the winter of 1912-13—I have made many applications of this instance and have found an appealing aspect of his theory. Indeed, it can hardly be denied that the politician who deliberately and conscientiously refuses to admit virtue in his opponent's creed, must have inhibited in some degree his natural tendency to acquire knowledge.[1] To put it more plainly, the man, whether politician or religious enthusiast, who becomes fanatic to the point of denying any kind of validity to the unwelcome statement is, or at some time has been, influenced by fear. The attempted explanation of absorption in a particular line of thought does not invalidate this statement, for although that explanation may account for an original bias or eventual hypertrophy in a particular direction, it cannot account for the blindness of the fanatic. The specialist cannot, for example, pretend

[1] I must beg that statement for the moment, but it is implicit in the whole of Ford's philosophy.

to be an authority on a subject outside his own province ; and he cannot specialise in politics, for example, by studying a single aspect of the question. Absorption in the propaganda of a particular party, where such absorption does not arise from a personal, which is practically in this sense an economic interest, must imply that there has been a deliberate denial of the alternative policy ; and in the case of the common exponent of this political bigotry I have always found that the party enthusiast was afraid to listen to any statement of his opponents. But, indeed, it should be evident that the absolute denial involved by a blind adherence to party, must constitute a form of morbid inhibition or obstruction. And, although I have taken this convenient illustration of politics and mentioned the more complex example of religious fanaticism, it must be understood that the argument applies with varying force to questions of belief in all forms that involve complete rejection, without sufficient examination, of the alternative statement. The fear of conversion, if it is not freed by a candid and liberal examination of the imagined dangers, can only be driven back by some form of what I have called morbid inhibitions.

In this connection, however, it must be clearly understood, first, that there are degrees of resolution, and so of effectiveness in the inhibiting act ; and, secondly, that in applying the test, say, to a man of public reputation, it is impossible to judge him by his public writings

or utterances. Many Cabinet Ministers have the fullest sympathy with their opponents' policy, and have persisted in their own, either for purposes of private interest or of what they may regard as temporary expediency. Judged by the commonly prevailing standard of morality, such men are sometimes subjects for contempt; but as a matter of fact they have been compelled by the very convention which condemns them. In a government which is elected by the inhibited, the free man can find no opportunity for action.

A further aspect of inhibition, and one that cannot primarily be included in the 'morbid' category, is that aspect which influences the common conditions of social intercourse. All our ordinary relations with mankind necessitate some form of self-repression, the most obvious examples being those arising from politeness and tact. In these examples, however, the normal, inhibitive act is merely one of self-control so long as nothing but our speech and conduct is restrained. It is only when the thought of such natural desires as would lead to a rupture of social relations is fearfully thrust back into the subconsciousness that the inhibition may become morbid. It is evident in these examples that fear is again the dominant impulse; and that the greater the fear of offending, the more dangerous becomes the self-suppression.

Again the common impulse—probably arising in this case from a sexual complex—to shock a social gather-

ing by some obscene act or expression, may be dangerous to sanity if it be mentally suppressed with a shudder of fear. Some release from this inhibition is afforded in dreams—the characteristic dream of appearing naked among a crowd being an instance; but any tendency to morbidity is avoided by a quiet mental reception and examination of the impulse when it arises. Where there is no fear there is no danger, was one of Ford's *obiter dicta*. But enough if the general nature of morbid inhibition and obstruction has been indicated to allow the emergence of its opposite as a fairly definite conception.

I have suggested in the foregoing paragraphs that Ford recognised two main forms of inhibition. One of them comparatively innocuous and hardly distinguishable from self-control, namely, the form in which the thought is allowed free play in the mind, and only possible consequences of conduct and speech are withheld; while the other is that which I have called dangerous, and implies the terrified or shocked rejection of the thought itself. The first of these forms is also a form of the antithesis we are now examining. The acceptance of a thought and the refusal to express it in words or action is the higher form of inhibition and the lower form of identification with the primitive urge. The higher form of the latter dares all with splendid courage. But both forms are essential to the conduct of life under present conditions; or, perhaps,

I should rather say in the present state of our psychical and physical development.

I must admit, however, that the necessity for the use of restraint in this passing stage of our evolution constitutes a difficulty that Ford never made quite clear to me. On *a priori* grounds he found this necessity hard to explain and his nearest approximation to a solution was probably the one I indicated in a previous paragraph, namely, that our standard of goodness is constantly changing. Starting from his original hypothesis he could not deny the validity of impulse, but he sought to justify its expression to meet the demands of the multiform other impulses to which it would necessarily be opposed.

I remember his speaking of the 'crazy impatience' of Nietzsche in this connection, and the phrase stuck in my mind and has furnished me with the vague outline of a test. For it must be evident that Ford's theory of the rightness of free expression would, if it were pressed to its logical conclusion, coincide exactly with Nietzsche's principle of saying 'Yea, to Life.' Yet, if we give a free rein to hate, lust, and appetite—impulses which appear far more general than the covering antitheses of love and the desire for the beautiful—we appear inevitably to be riding towards destruction. The phrase 'crazy impatience' has suggested to me the possibility of emergence from this apparently blind alley. Let me take 'Hate' as an example.

Now in some forms hatred has been upheld as an admirable quality. Christ exhibited quite clearly His hatred of hypocrisy and expressed it both in His words and actions; while hatred of injustice and oppression is so universally admired among civilised nations, that we have boldly proclaimed it as the inspiration of England's motive for entering the Great War. But if it be praiseworthy to hate what we call an 'evil' principle, how can we avoid the inference that it is justifiable to hate the exponents of an evil principle? Christ preached salvation by an act of defensive meekness, and drove out the money-lenders with a scourge; and it is a lamentable fact that the gospel of love has failed to overcome the gospel of hate in the practice of human affairs. It would seem to follow, therefore, that failing to convert the exponent of evil we are justified in meeting hate with hate.

Can we find a way out of this impasse without a partial withdrawal of our premisses, in the thought of that 'crazy impatience'? To me the phrase represents at once a qualification and a definition; but I will confine myself to the definition as the qualification is implicit.

Let us assume, then, that hate of what we are pleased to call evil or obstruction is a natural impulse and works for good or liberation; and beg, for a moment, the question of whether the subject of passion can excuse an impulse which might be evil if otherwise directed. Beyond this I would postulate that the

impulse of hate is always courageous, and further that many of its supposed expressions, such as ferocity or brutality, are so poisoned with fear that they cannot be called free ; but are, in fact, an instance of craziness. And to complete the analogy of our phrase, I would submit that impatience must always imply some inner restraint ; that we are not, as a matter of fact, impatient with anything but our own weakness to overcome a real or imagined obstacle.

To elaborate the last paragraph I will suggest a couple of illustrations, and ask first if ferocity or cruelty can possibly be the expressions of the thing I have in mind as a spontaneous impulse ? The terrorised animal, such as the uniformed German citizen suspecting treachery from every member of the outraged Belgian population, displays ferocity. And we are told that the greater part of the German nation displays the same tendency, occasionally, against the threat of English interference. But I insist without hesitation that the instance is essentially one of inhibition. I do not believe that the average German citizen can exhibit pure impulsive hate. He has been terrified, and in defence he has inhibited all his natural desire towards fraternity, towards peace, towards a sentimental good humour so far as the English are concerned. (The English, not England ; that stands to him merely as a meaningless symbol of an imagined evil.) He dare not consider, much less liberate, his natural gentleness. He has thrust it far back into his

subconsciousness, as a danger and an obstacle that may prevent his winning the War. And every word of this condemnation applies to ourselves not less than to our present enemies. This hate of ours and theirs, represents a deliberate clenching of our natural expression. There is nothing courageous or liberating in this hate that finds emergence in ferocity.

In the same way I would urge that impatience always implies some inner suppression, or even that impatience is nothing more than a symptom of a divided mind, of desires thwarted by our inability to find free expression. To take a paltry instance—as probably the more difficult example to explain—if I fumble with a knot in my boot-lace and finally break it in exasperation, I exhibit the symptoms of a double purpose. On the one hand, I have lacked the concentration to disentangle the knot; on the other, I have not at once put that intention away from me and solved the problem by an exercise of strength. And it would be quite easy to prove that every symptom of impatience is due to a similar opposition of two or more half-expressed intentions. The bar that thwarts us is not the material or psychical opposition we meet from without, but our own inability to find the single countervailing force of expression. Impatience, in fine, denotes hesitation; and hesitation implies the need for inhibiting one or more modes of thought or action.

From these illustrations we come to a thought of our ideal impulse of hate as being in its essence a single

desire; and we must therefore exclude from our consideration all those apparent examples of hate which imply a mixed intention, and thus the necessity for the suppression of, say, a counterbalancing ethical motive. And I do not believe (I join issue here with Mr. Clutton Brock's theory expressed in *The Ultimate Belief*) that human hatred ever finds this singleness of impulse unless the cause of the hatred is, in some sense, a righteous one. We have moved too far towards sympathy and understanding to hate the unoffending. Hate is a natural impulse and a wonderful power, but it can never find pure expression unless it is great enough to be as single-minded as love. Indeed, I am not sure that hate and love are necessarily opposites. It seems possible that if we could refine our definitions to absolute purity, we might reach the single, undiluted base of both emotions.

This long diversion has taken me somewhat away from my exposition of Ford's philosophy, inasmuch as I have been striving to justify him by an inductive process of my own—a risky task for the exegete. At the same time I believe that my attempted analysis has done something to indicate, if only by implication, an important principle of his general theory. So much depends on that 'singleness of mind,' I have deliberately insisted upon; a description that denotes not the narrow-minded fury of the fanatic, but a consciousness of unity with all life, with something more than physical humanity.

In a former paragraph I made reference to Ford's phrase the 'tenuity of genius,' and as this chapter does not purport to be anything more than a haphazard collection of notes, I may adduce that instance here as a further commentary on the fundamental theory. 'Tenuity,' in this sense, does not, of course, denote 'thinness,' but was used in its derivative meaning as applied to fluids, and indicates—if I may put it negatively—a lack of density. The quality of mind that is exhibited as genius, had in it, according to Ford, something peculiarly subtile, and as it were discrete. On the other hand, I remember his using one of his hasty figures and saying that the particles of the man of genius behaved like steel filings in a magnetic field, 'leaping to arrangement and interpretation.' But both figures imply mobility, and that is, perhaps, the more inconclusive concept. And to mobility again must be added the idea of a higher potential for that reciprocity between the units which was discussed in its relation to consciousness.

All these phrases and figures, however, must not be too rigorously related to a physical conception. The base of our unit as discussed in an earlier paragraph is not material but spiritual. At the same time there is no absurdity in the assumption that this primitive spiritual unit should obey those laws which we have hypothecated as controlling the limitations of matter. When we come to examine those 'laws,' indeed, we find that no one of them is susceptible of an *a priori*

explanation. Are we, for example, quite unable to prove that the law of gravitation might be suspended in certain conditions which do not happen to have occurred within human experience? We have no more knowledge of the true 'how' and 'why' of gravitation than we have of the intentions of God.

For these reasons I maintain that there is no inherent absurdity, even from the point of view of the physicist, in postulating an ultimate atom which is not material and yet—in the complexes that alone permit our awareness of its functions—conforms within human experience to certain inferred principles of apparently mechanical conduct. And it is this elusive, undefinable unit which Ford referred to, in his suggestion of greater 'mobility' in the composition of the mere physical structure of the man whom we recognise as a genius. He always avoided the use of such words as brain or mentality in this connection; agreeing with Samuel Butler that we are far too apt to relate all physical phenomena, such as that of memory, to this single function. He admitted that he was unable to give a precise value to that function in the human economy. It might, he thought, be a predominant one. But he inclined to believe that the work of the brain was primarily one of correlation rather than of initiative; while he always assumed that what we call character or personality was inherent in the constitution of the individual as a whole and depended largely on that constitution's potentialities for mobility and reciprocity.

With such assumptions it becomes, I think, increasingly evident that the man of genius is one who mobilises most easily into 'arrangement and interpretation' under the impulse of the primitive urge; and so is able to reveal some fraction of that universal content, which this 'primitive urge' of ours is always seeking to express. And if we make application of this wide principle to the meagre data we have so far collected as bearing on the problem under consideration, we shall find that the empiric or pragmatic test may be reasonably satisfied—possibly to the complete reconciliation of Nordau and Shaw.

As an example of this application I may note that genius, according to Ford, must be vagarious if it is to come to its fullest expression. To apply the more or less mechanical formula suggested above, the arrangement which tends to become static destroys its own value for interpretation. In the attempt to express an universal it is fatal to crystallise an abstraction, for it then inclines to become obstructive. Nietzsche is an excellent instance of this principle. So long as he remained mobile to the creative suggestion he was an immensely valuable interpreter. But when he fell in love with his own abstraction, he shut out, as it were, all impulses that did not subserve his immediate purpose, which then became cramped, didactic, inconclusive. The effect upon himself was inevitable. His high original potentiality, or, in other words, his sensitivity, indicated a force strong enough to inhibit

what he regarded as antagonistic impulses, all too completely. Thus he lost his capacity for mobility, and mobility being an essential function of his character as a man of genius he destroyed himself by assuming rigidity. Or it may seem, Ford said, abruptly changing the metaphor, as if he had drowned himself. While he kept all his gates open to the flood the stream poured through him, but when he closed one after another until only one was left, the flood rose higher and higher until he was swept away. For a time, you know, it looks as if we were doing an immense work with that one open gate—the rush is so terrific. But it can't last. There must be other outlets. That single gate is known to us pathologically as the *idée fixe*.

And that metaphor may help us to explain the apparent immorality of some men of genius. They must open their volitions to other impulses or be drowned. But sometimes those other gates are drawn too high, and then the stream of interpretation may dwindle to the veriest trickle. 'Again you may find another illustration of what I mean in my metaphors,' he once wrote to me, 'the single illustration that tends to crystallise the idea is an awful snare. You cannot express genius in a purely physical formula.'

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I am uncomfortably aware that these notes are lamentably insufficient, but I dare not expand them. I see only too clearly that if I once permit myself to

attempt a fuller exposition, all the first part of this book will shrink to a mere preface in comparison with the immense work I feel so strongly inclined to write. That work, however, must be postponed until I have the leisure to collate Ford's material. Meanwhile I must point out that what I have written here must not be subjected to too intensive or stringent criticism. All that I have attempted in this place is *suggestion*. I have found in Ford's philosophy the hint of a new aspect; and I have striven to convey that, often to the detriment of a logical statement.

But, indeed, although a reasoned analysis must succeed to this mere indication of a test and a formula, I know that the analysis must tend to narrow and obstruct the fundamental principle. It is the limitation of the logical method that it attempts too complete an exposition, and so crystallises a part to the rejection of all those apparently contradictory impulses that also seek expression. The analogy of Ford's primary assumption runs through every example. We cannot express the whole, but the danger of morbid inhibition lies behind every denial. And Ford would agree with me in affirming that a positive immorality (as we now regard it) is a far more admirable thing than a negative virtue.

J. D. B.

A FURTHER NOTE ON FORD'S PHILOSOPHY

By K. R.

I CONSIDER that Ford was not so much a philosopher as a man who tried to live in the light of a philosophical outlook—or, to put it better, of a philosophical 'in-look.' His philosophy was primarily felt, and only incidentally formulated. He seemed at times to reach back into hidden recesses of his mind and to draw upon a subconscious store of wisdom; at other times he seemed—I can only put it in this way—literally to create wisdom. The point which I feel I must emphasise is that every expression of his philosophy to which he gave voice was an *ad hoc* expression. Devoted to synthesis, to the mental task of viewing reality, value, and purpose as a coherent unity, he no sooner gave thought to the smallest significant problem than he made it an essential fragment of the universal problem; but for him the universal existed to be explored by intuition in the interests of the immediate. He maintained that one cannot consciously build up an intellectual conception of the universe without gradually, and at last completely exchanging interest in the universe for interest in dialectic. He had a constructive philosophy, but it

was intuitional, and that is why neither Beresford nor I can explain how he constructed it. He let the material recede into the back of his mind and the philosophy constructed itself; that is one way of putting it.

Or I could say that he treated intuition as a faculty that can be trained by practice in its function of apprehending, by degrees, the nature of the universe; this best expresses my own notion of the matter, and, I think, best renders Ford's notion, but to postulate this subconscious function—or superconscious function, as I should prefer to call it—is to make a very large prior assumption. I will therefore leave open the hypothesis of superconscious constructive thought (an idea familiar to any one who has ever 'slept on' a knotty problem) side by side with that of superconscious apprehension of existing structure; without prejudice to the further possibility that the two hypotheses may be related aspects of the same truth.

Now, in presenting to Beresford the nearest approach that he ever made to a formal statement of his philosophical position, Ford was none the less following his usual practice and interpreting his intuition for the furtherance of an immediate end. (I need hardly labour the point that the more strictly *immediate* an end, the more it excludes ulterior motive.) And the end in this case finds its fulfilment in Beresford's foregoing chapter. It was to elicit a view of the universe that he and Beresford could hold in common. Hence

Beresford's difficulty in knowing how much is Ford's and how much his own. When Ford gave you an idea he kept no mortgage upon it himself; he made it your own idea by unrestricted deed of gift. And to give—to give effectually—was always the most immediate of his aims.

What I have just written would imply a criticism of Beresford's presentation, were it not that it reinforces his claim to make that presentation as much of a personal re-interpretation as he chooses. Beresford has spoken of our difference of view as to the teleological trend of Ford's philosophy. I will not try to show how his presentation could be converted, by certain differences of proportionate emphasis without any change of substantial statement, into a teleology qualified only by necessary human incomprehension. I only mention that this would be possible, so that in speaking further of Ford's doctrine of immediate ends—which, unless it is teleological, is pragmatism unmitigated and abominable—I may not lose essential touch with that region of his intuitive speculations which Beresford has portrayed.

For the practical Ford, the Ford of daily ingenuities and expediencies in school work, was identical with the Ford whom we remember reaching back into the depths of his mind—or the depths beyond his mind—for that conception of 'the primary urge behind life.' But when I think of his philosophy as expressed in daylight action, my instinct (I am willing to underline

the 'my') pictures him as listening and responding to a whispered call from before, rather than as yielding to a suggestive pressure from behind. As the parents used to say of their children, he could be led but he could not be driven. The distinction is only a symbolism in connection with a 'primary urge,' which must be conceived as extra-spatial and extra-temporal; but it matters a good deal to my present purpose.

I have given some slight indication of Ford's views about the function of intuition in framing a cosmology, and Beresford has caught the authentic thrill of his venturous journeys into the darker unknown; it needs an effort of imaginative understanding to co-ordinate this with the principle of immediate ends which was the basis of his practical philosophy of life. Still this principle can be defined in terms of intuition —of intuition in league with intellect. The immediate end is the end towards which no secondary or ulterior motive points; it is the end dictated by the nearest possible approach to pure volition. An act of volition, Ford would maintain, was 'pure' in so far as it was prompted by intuition alone; the function of intellect was to keep open the right intuitive channel, by recognising ulterior motives and holding them on one side. Not that an ulterior motive, in his view, was necessarily irrelevant to right action; it was often extremely relevant, but always subordinate. Pure volition had first to be isolated in the mind (he characterised this as a clumsy description of a very swift,

habitual form of mental action); it had then to be set free along the open channel, drawing relevant motive after it in its course, leaving irrelevant motive behind. The union of this conception with Beresford's formula of 'effortless, motiveless expression' will be obvious enough, and I can turn to its practical application, especially its application to the teaching of children.

It seems to me that Ford got right away from the usual pendulum-swing between the morbidly introspective and the cheerfully conscienceless view of conduct, by putting his finger upon the true function of the introspective faculty. Simple action upon impulse, entirely non-moral as far as the consciousness is aware, has the general approval of mankind in spite of its obvious dangers: even in the case of crime, we condone the crime of impulse while we condemn the crime of intention. The problem is to interpose the conscious censorship, the conscious inhibition (later, of course, to become habitual and in that sense subconscious) without clogging the passage for pure volition. Ford believed that, instinctively fearing this obstruction, we shrink from applying introspection and inhibition until something has gone manifestly and uncomfortably wrong; and then it is too late for the right use of the unpractised power. Consequently, he taught children to sift their own motives continually, as a kind of mental game, and so to give the introspection-faculty continual practice upon material

that was not painful to touch; thus, he believed, a habit of easy, rapid and entirely healthy introspection was encouraged. On the other hand, he never fostered introspection when a child was in some small crisis of difficulty, but waited for the inflammation to subside.

I was puzzled as to the process by which inhibitions could be ranged, as in the mental picture he had given me, to form as it were a guard of honour for pure volition; his only explanation was that they arranged themselves, when once the healthy habit of mind was in operation. They became knotted and obstructive (he twisted his fingers together to convey a sense of painful tension) when they had been habitually applied to none but the 'sore places in the consciousness.' We seem to touch here upon the genesis of those inhibitions due to fear of which Beresford has spoken.

Ford left the picture of normal inhibitions constituting a 'guard of honour' for pure volition, to stand as his meaning while he cleared the field of discussion; but he meant more. The function of intellect in morals was not merely negative and restrictive. It was also directive; and it is here that the word inhibition fails. A gas-pipe, he said, inhibits the gas from escaping where it is not wanted and would be dangerous; but it also performs the very positive function of directing the gas to the precise places where illumination is needed; and he sketched a conception of the moral consciousness as a system of flexible, sentient tubes—

subtle tentacles of mind-stuff—ready at a moment's notice to dart a jet of volition into the right place. But this figure erred on the other side, making volition too subservient, unless one imagined that the nature of the volition determined the direction to be accorded for its own best expression.

I am trying to give, by means of fugitive hints and recollections, some notion of the way in which Ford related his wide intuitive conception of the nature of the universe to the particular problem of everyday morals. Perhaps I can best sum up that relation by saying that he saw the ' primary urge ' as functioning through an unthinkable multiplicity of channels, constituting in total a resistance, like the resistance of a vast and complex electrical circuit, through which only a power of unthinkable magnitude could manifest itself. And the microcosm of human individuality is also a complex ramification of resistances, through which volition plays, breaking down and re-fashioning the structure in the course of self-expression. No man can come near to expressing his own total volition, his own small share in the ' primary urge,' except in rare moments of high passion ; the moral problem in the main is that of directing volition through resistance. And here the practical question about volition itself arises : what is the objective of will ? Ford's principle of immediate ends furnishes, I think, a much-to-be-desired point of union between the volitional principle and practical morality. It gives

to true immediacy the dignity of an ultimate—of The Ultimate.

We are still in the cold as to the nature of that motiveless motive (the naked paradox is unavoidable) which lies behind the merely temporary explanation of immediacy. What volition is there that is in no sense mediate? I can draw an answer only from Ford's life and character; he never stated his final principle in so many words. But I come to a conclusion which Beresford's presentation has foreshadowed in assigning an ultimate value to the principle of reciprocity. Here I am afraid of colouring Ford's philosophy with an eschatology of my own to which I cannot be sure that he would have assented, though personally I feel it to be in essential unity with his thought. But I am on safe ground in saying that fellowship—service—the constructive union of human volitions—in a word, that Love was the one immediate principle of his own practical morality; and I can scarcely hesitate to go further, and to say that he believed in some ultimate synthesis in terms of Love. Or—if I continue to grope for definitions in a region where the intellectual boundaries fade and disappear—that this synthesis was not so much ultimate as perpetual, and, because perpetual, eternal, timeless. Ford was more sternly sincere in facing the implications of reality than any man whom I have known; and he also, more than any man whom I have known, put his trust in reality, with all its paradoxes, its bewildering

maze of indeterminate equations. Some inner sense in him was satisfied by that exacting and laborious service. He declined to fall back upon comfortable illusions of certainty. I can see no other interpretation than that he surmised a purpose in life, implying a realisation of triumph and joy in that Immediate which is our window upon the Eternal.

THE END

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